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H. H. The Khedive. deposed 19 Dec 1914

NEW EGYPT

BY

A. B. DE GUERVILLE

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INTRODUCTION

IN the autumn of last year, whilst spending a few days at Caux, that ideal resort overlooking Territet with its lovely bay on Lac Leman, I chanced to meet an old friend of mine, a diplomatist, who had passed some ten years or so of his life in Egypt.

"I have just been reading 'Au Japon'," [1] he said to me, "and my mind is now made up. I can resist no longer. I am off for a trip to the land of the Chrysanthemum. Won't you come and have another peep at your old loves?"

"No, my dear fellow," I replied. "I am going to flirt with yours. You are bound for the land of the 'Mousmé,' I am bound for the land 'of mummies.'"

"Egypt?"

A far off look came into his eyes, a sigh escaped his lips, whilst he added:

"I envy you. It is an ideal winter spot. But you will find yourself greatly mistaken if you expect to meet only mummies there. As to the fair sex, I can tell you. . . But what's the good? . . . You will have the pleasure of discovering for yourself all the treasures which Egypt offers in winter to those who have eyes to see and the wisdom to understand. I have half a mind to come with you, but Japan is too seductive. Go, my dear chap. Not your first visit, is it? Ah! you will find the proverb says truly: 'He who has once tasted of the waters of the Nile will surely return to drink thereof.' But tell me, what are you going for—amusement?"

"To amuse myself? Rather not. I'm going to write another book."

[1] "Au Japon," par A. B. de Guerville, 1904. 1 vol. in 16mo. Frs. 3.50. Lemerre, Editeur, Paris.

"What! on Egypt? . . . Poor fellow!"

It would be impossible to describe the expression of pity, half surprised, half amused, of my friend the diplomatist.

"I envy you no longer," he said. "I only pity you, The most terrible, brain-splitting Chinese puzzle is simple as A, B, C, compared with the Egyptian question."

"But I don't intend to have anything to do with the Egyptian question. It is the country, its inhabitants, their customs, which——"

"Yes, but that's the rub. I defy you to write of all that without touching on the thousand and one financial and political questions in which Egypt is to-day head over ears. Listen! I have passed years there, and behind the scenes, as you know. Very well. I tell you frankly I cannot say that I know Egypt a whit better now than before I went; in fact, I believe the longer one lives there the less one sees clear. We no more understand the Egyptians than we understand the Japanese; and, besides, there is this difference that, whereas the latter understand themselves, the former do not, any more than we do. Ah! It is a pretty mess, as you will see for yourself."

There is no mistake; my friend was right. I had no doubt as to the difficult task I had undertaken.

To understand Egypt, to describe in a single volume its past glorious but in ruins, its present full of energy and work, its future of hope and promise, is humanly impossible. "A New Egypt" has not been written for my Egyptian friends, for those who know thoroughly this lovely land. Herein will be found only impressions, such as may strike the traveller as he makes his way from Alexandria to Fashoda, with here and there some remarks on matters political, financial and religious, which I have been able to obtain from good sources. These sources are the highly placed personages in the Egyptian world, English, French, native and others; these men, keen and talented, who, in palaces, ministries, legations, schools, hospitals, banks or large industrial concerns, are working without ceasing for the regeneration of Egypt. I have knocked at all doors, rich and poor, high and low, and everywhere a warm welcome has awaited me. "Enter, observe, criticise. Here are our attempts, and, alas! here also are our failures."

And to-day an easy task would await me if, instead of twenty chapters, I could write twenty volumes. On each subject, on each page, the fear is always with me that I may not have written enough to give a clear idea of Egypt to those who know it not, and yet I fear also to overstep the limits I have set myself in this small book.

To all those who have aided me, in Egypt and in the Soudan, I now express my most sincere gratitude and thanks. I give no names: they are modest folk, and, besides, have no need of my little advertisement.

Amongst the illustrations are a certain number of photographs taken either by myself or by friends, and others kindly placed at my disposal by Messrs. Dittrich and Lekégian of Cairo, M. Béato of Luxor, M. Fiorillo of Assouan, M. Veniéris of Khartoum, and Herr Turstig of Omdurman.

There are very few good photographers in Egypt, and I should advise those amateurs who do not develop their own work to be very careful. I have had many plates and films absolutely ruined by ignoramuses calling themselves "prize photographers." To those in Cairo I can thoroughly recommend either M. Lekégian or M. Dittrich, photographer to the Court. The latter has a wonderful collection of portraits, admirably done, of all the more important persons. His rooms are a real museum of all the celebrities, masculine and feminine, whom Cairo has known in the last five-and-twenty years. As to M. Lekégian, he has, besides some remarkable portraits, a unique collection of views and native types both in large prints and in post-cards.

And finally, amongst the other illustrations, will be found many photographs, veritable little gems, signed by Mr. David Gardiner, of New York, an amateur whom I do not hesitate to call a real artist.

My only regret is my inability to make use of all the negatives kindly placed at my disposal by Mr. Gardiner. However, I trust that some day he will take my advice and publish an album of "Egypt Illustrated," unless, indeed, I can avail myself of them in a future work. In fact, in the present volume I find that I have not been able to include all that I could have wished, and therefore I hope at some future date

to supplement the present book with another entitled " Egypt Intime," which I hope will not be without interest to my readers.

At present my object will be attained if those who read these pages, and who have not already seen the Nile, will feel a desire to pass a few months in the land which, without doubt, for a winter holiday is one of the most charming, agreeable, and interesting.

Al Vista

THE HARBOUR AT ALEXANDRIA

CHAPTER I

ALEXANDRIA

First impressions—East and West—Poverty and riches—The Stock Exchange—Every man a speculator—Rolling in money—Wild extravagance—Women's hearts and men's purses—Place Mohamed Ali—The statue of a great man—How he founded his dynasty—English soldiers—Here since 1882—The bombardment of Alexandria—The *rôle* of France—Did Admiral Seymour exceed his orders ?—Kitchener's presence—An admiral's fears—The decline of French influence.

"WHAT ! you miserable person, sailing for Egypt under the German flag ? "

Such was the greeting of one of my friends at Marseilles, whilst he added ruefully :

"Heavens ! What are we coming to ? After having abandoned Egypt to the English, we allow the Germans to make themselves masters of the Mediterranean, the famous French lake, and these Teutonic devils have actually the audacity to start a line of fast steamships between Marseilles and Alexandria."

This loyal son of Marseilles was deeply in earnest, and not without cause. In fact, whilst ever renewed strikes are threatening the large French ports with certain ruin, paralysing all their efforts, all their energies, and all their schemes, the English, the Germans and the Italians are working

continuously to gain a footing where the French were yesterday supreme.

In establishing this new service between Marseilles and Alexandria, with a stay of twelve hours at Naples, and in setting aside for it two of their finest boats, the *Schleswig* and the *Hohenzollern*, of 8000 tons, the Norddeutscher Lloyd of Bremen have made a master-move.

It was because I had heard so much said of the pleasure and comfort of this new line that I determined to try it myself and find out how far it was true. I can now say that, from every point of view, all the praise was thoroughly deserved, and it must be admitted that, for the present, it is undoubtedly the *service de luxe* of the Mediterranean.

Before even arriving at Marseilles, I had proof of the energy and enterprise of the German shipping companies. I travelled down by the new P.L.M. express train, the "Côte d'Azure," the finest and most rapid train, I believe, not only in France, but in the world. As usual, the restaurant car attached was divided into two compartments, for smokers and non-smokers, between which was a door with a large glass panel. Here, on the glass, a magnificent picture of a huge steamship had been engraved, with, surrounding it in letters of gold, the name of a German Company, the "Hamburg-American Line."

So, whilst from Marseilles to Cairo the best service to-day is that of Lloyd of Bremen, the other powerful Company will not allow itself to be forgotten; and to the thousands of strangers making their way South for the winter, they draw attention to their magnificent steamers, and their motto, "Remember."

After five days of wind, rolling and pitching seas, came absolute calm. We had just entered the outer port of Alexandria, the famous town founded by Alexander the Great, the town which, in the time of Cleopatra, reigned queen of the Mediterranean.

The calm was of short duration. A noise, atrocious, infernal, indescribable, rose on every side. The *Schleswig* had hardly cast her anchor before she was surrounded by hundreds of small boats crammed with Egyptians, Turks and Arabs, who howled and gesticulated frantically. In a few

seconds the boat was invaded by this extraordinary crowd, dragomans, interpreters, porters from different hotels, boatmen, touts from different agencies, &c., &c. It was pandemonium, a Tower of Babel gone mad; whilst the poor tourist, at his wit's end, saw fifty devils, black or brown, throw themselves on to his luggage. But at this moment a stentorian voice was heard: "All right, gentlemen, all right! Here are Cook's men, they will look after everything." And on the deck, a huge Arab, in a superb costume, suddenly appeared, surrounded by a crowd of sturdy porters. Tight red jerseys covered the chests of these men, on which in white letters was sewn "Thos. Cook and Sons." As if by magic quiet was restored: like a general on the field of battle, Cook's agent took command, answering politely the numerous questions put to him by the travellers; and to those anxious about the formalities to be gone through at the Custom House, he explained that, severe as these were, they need not trouble: "There is no Custom examination for you," he said, smiling quietly; "we have obtained special permission to pass the luggage of all our passengers without being opened. You have only to give us your luggage tickets and let us know where you wish it sent, either to your hotel or to the station, and you will find it there awaiting you."

Nothing could have explained better the justice and appropriateness of the title given to the directors of Messrs. Cook, "the uncrowned kings of Egypt and the East!" Was not the Emperor William himself, when he wished to visit the Holy Land, obliged to confide himself and all his belongings to Messrs. Cook, like the most ordinary of tourists? The white boats of the Agency lay alongside the *Schleswig*, and we soon found ourselves installed in one of them with all our baggage.

A few minutes later, a victoria with a couple of excellent little horses, took us swiftly along the streets of Alexandria.

First of all came the Arab quarter: its streets muddy and filthy, its shops open to all the winds of heaven, its houses dark and mysterious, its swarming crowd, the negro, the brown-skinned, and the white; its beggars, its cripples, its children almost naked, crying, running, shouting; its veiled women; and above all, its smells, acrid and indescribable, the odour of the East, which at first sickens and disgusts.

But our little horses going hard, all that was soon passed, and the quarter inhabited by the Europeans and the rich Egyptians came into view, with its large and beautiful streets, its huge houses, superb palaces, its gay cafés, and its shops, worthy of the Parisian Boulevards.

Lekegian

THE RUE CHERIF PASHA, ALEXANDRIA

More than anything else, this is the land of contrasts. Here a palace where reigns unbridled luxury, there a hovel swarming with beings scarcely human.

We slacken our pace as we enter the famous "Place Mohamed Ali," in the middle of which rises the equestrian statue of the founder of the reigning dynasty, a fine piece of work by Jaquemart. This is the centre of the European life, the Hyde Park Corner of Alexandria, where at certain hours of the day all the rank and fashion of the town may be seen.

Here and there, in passing, I get a shake of the hand from some old friend, business man, banker or broker. As for speculators, every one, more or less, is that.

For several years the mania for speculation seems to have attacked the whole population, and the Stock Exchange at Alexandria is, as it were, the heart of the body politic, full of life, of hopes and fears, where every one large and small,

rich or poor, strong or weak, meets on common ground. Cotton, its rise or fall, that is the predominant thought in the minds of all those men amongst whom are so many familiar faces.

Indeed, after nine months' scraping and hoarding, these good Alexandrians troop across to Paris and the best known watering-places on the Continent, to disgorge in the remaining three their accumulated gains.

All have the look of men well pleased with the world, and all explain themselves thus: "My dear fellow, business is A 1. Egypt has entered on an era of prosperity hardly credible. We are making money hand over fist, every one is in the swim. You will see for yourself, from one end of Egypt to the other you will hear the same story. The Government has been able to reduce taxation and increase the salaries of its employees, big and little. The golden age has arrived!"

Can this be possible? Can it be that, whilst in Europe and America every one cries poverty, there is only prosperity here, in this land of Egypt, which scarcely twenty years ago was in a state of bankruptcy?

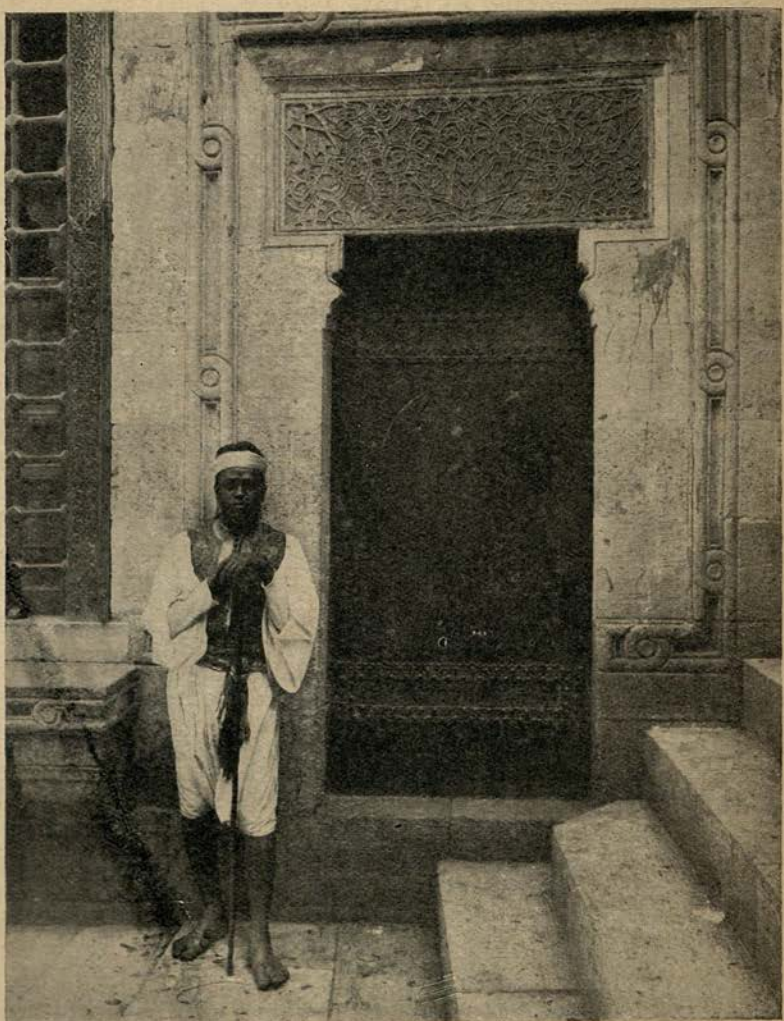
And, strange as it may seem, not one of these men will speak to you of Egypt, of its history, of its artistic treasures, not one of them will advise you to visit a museum, a monument, or a park.

The Stock Exchange and Cotton, these are the be-all and end-all of existence. If by chance they do advise you to go to the theatre, it will not be because there is something particularly good to be seen, but simply because "X receives £4000 for three performances, and that the stones and jewels in the hair or round the necks of the *élégantes* represent a sum of £10,000,000 sterling!"

When he talks cotton or diamonds, your Alexandrian is a bit of a braggart. In a word, his head is a money-box, and his heart a purse, and they are both crammed to repletion with bank notes. All the same he is a good fellow, pleasant, hospitable, and generous. If he has the faults of the confirmed gambler he has also his good qualities.

As to his better-half, it is difficult to judge. Admiration has perhaps blinded me, for the "Alexandrine" is so pretty, so elegant, and so chic, that criticism is quite disarmed. One

would have to travel far to find a town where there are so many young women whose good looks and perfect elegance



David Gardiner

A "SAÏS" (RUNNER)

continually charm the eye. It may be said, of course, that they are shallow, that their dresses, their jewels, and especially

their flirtations are of more interest to them than the graver questions of life; but what does that matter when they are so charming, and so deliciously feminine?

Certainly we are far from the time when in Alexandria there was a famine of femininity either "d'un monde ou de l'autre."

In a town in which the upper classes are composed of so many different nationalities, Egyptians, Greeks, Levantines, Italians, French, English and Germans, there are as a matter of course many cliques, more or less jealous of one another; but there is one common ground where all unite and all help—Charity, which, here as elsewhere, seems to bring out all that is best in our common humanity.

The Greek colony, rich, numerous and powerful, is at the head of all those good works whose end is the alleviation of human suffering; and amongst those whose efforts in well-doing are continuous I would mention the Salvagos, the Zervudachis, the Em. Benackis and the Sinadinos.

The first-named family has just given to the town the sum of £20,000, in order to found a School of Art, a step in the right direction, and one which, I trust, will help considerably to raise Alexandria from its present state of rather sordid money-making.

Immense as the progress of the town has been in the last quarter of a century, and brilliant as its present position is, I have not a doubt that, in the near future, it will be called upon to occupy a position much more important.

To do so, however, it must, above all, render its port safer and more accessible, make its quays and docks considerably larger, its facilities to international trade greater, and reduce its port dues, to-day standing at much too high a figure.

Great efforts have been made, I know, and the Egyptian Government have already expended a sum of over £200,000 on important works, whilst an equal amount has just been set aside for new works. Only last winter, the situation was such that ships, after having tried in vain to unload their cargoes, were obliged to leave without discharging. There was no room on the quays. This state of things, deplorable as it seems, is not due, as one might think, to any slackness on the part of

the Government, but simply to the fact that the trade of the port has grown so enormously and so rapidly that it has been impossible for the Minister of Public Works to keep pace with it with the means at his disposal.

If Alexandria cannot assert the possession of the remains of her founder (Alexander the Great), she can at least boast of having a statue of the greatest man which modern Egypt has seen. I refer to Mohamed Ali, the founder of the Khedivial dynasty, and a hero of whom his descendants and Egypt have every reason to be proud.

The story of his life reads like a most captivating romance. This man, of humble origin, thanks to his extraordinary talents and iron will, became Pasha of Egypt at a time (1805) when the country, a Turkish province, was governed and sucked dry by the Mamelukes. With a small sum of money, lent to him, it is said, by an Armenian, uncle of the future great Egyptian Nubar, and accompanied by a handful of adventurers as hardy as himself, he landed in Egypt, and commenced that epic which lasted forty years, and in which he made himself, in a way, the arbiter of the destinies of the Mussulman world.

Thanks to him and to his genius, Egypt played the part of a great Power and made Turkey tremble.

Great diseases sometimes require drastic treatment, and, without hesitation, he caused the Mamelukes to be massacred, and commenced the pacification of Upper Egypt. Whilst he thus waged war in a far country the English landed at Alexandria (1807), and advanced on Rosetta. But Mohamed Ali was cast in a different mould from Arabi and the insurgents of 1882. Returning rapidly he fell like a thunderbolt on the English, driving them back on Alexandria, where, thanks to the protection afforded them by their fleet, they were enabled to re-embark.

A faithful vassal of the Sultan, he helped him in his wars against Greece, and also against England. For Turkey he conquered Crete (1823), and recovered Morea (1824). His army, at one time only 20,000 strong, had now been raised to 100,000.

His son Ismaïl, ascending the Nile, had planted the Egyptian

flag at Sennar, at the junction of the White and Blue Niles, and conquered the rich Sudanese province of Kordofan, whilst for the first time Egypt possessed two powerful fleets, one on the Mediterranean and another on the Red Sea.

In the interior the country was quiet and prosperous, whilst this great man, unable himself to read or write, founded schools and universities.

Round him he gathered a number of talented Frenchmen, of whom one, Colonel Sèves, known in Egypt under the name of Soliman Pasha, worked hard to improve the army; whilst another, the engineer Bessan, directed his energies to increasing the fleet, of which he was the founder.

Lekegian

STATUE OF MOHAMED ALI

Placed at the disposal of his Sovereign, Sultan Makmoud, this fleet was entirely destroyed at Navarin (1827) by the united navies of France and England, to the great surprise of Mohamed Ali, who could not understand that the former should ally themselves to the latter in order to sink the very ships which they had just sold to him. With each year the power of the Pasha increased, and with it the jealousy of the Sultan. At last the Sovereign thought that the "removal" of the vassal would be decidedly for the best, and war broke out between Egypt and Turkey.

It was then that these Egyptian soldiers, so despised by Turks and Europeans, astonished the world.

Commanded by a man endowed with true military genius, Ibrahim, son of Mohamed Ali, they invaded Syria, captured

St. Jean d'Acre, routed the Turks at Damascus and Aleppo, invaded Asia Minor, and finally crushed the enemy at Konieh (1832).

The road to Constantinople was open and the Turkish Empire at its last gasp . . . but the Powers, the famous Powers, were there, full of their pitiful ambitions, and ready to sacrifice Egypt, as well as Armenia, Crete and Greece, in order to maintain the Ottoman Empire and all the crimes committed in its name.

Thus then the Powers stopped the victorious Egyptian army at the very doors of Constantinople, as in 1897 they stopped the Greek troops at the frontier of Turkey, at the moment when they were about to enter Ottoman territory, a move which would undoubtedly have led to a general rising in the Balkans against the Sultan. Thanks to the Powers, the latter had time to concentrate a formidable army and crush Greece.

Even so in 1832 the Egyptians were held back at the time the Empire of the Sultan was about to succumb; but the Powers, as usual, could not agree amongst themselves, and for seven years the negotiations continued. Taking advantage of the delay, the Sultan massed his troops, and at last, believing in certain victory, he threw them suddenly against the army of Ibrahim (1839). The result was disastrous. The Turks were once more overwhelmed, whilst 15,000 prisoners and all their artillery fell into the hands of the Egyptians. At the same time the Turkish fleet surrendered to the victorious Pasha.

The Sultan Makmoud died of rage; but once more Egypt was cheated of the just fruits of victory, and, after negotiations and conferences without end, Mohamed Ali was obliged to renounce Syria and Asia Minor, to restore the fleet, and content himself and his descendants with the Vice-Royalty of Egypt under the *generous, enlightened, and civilised* Sultans of Turkey!

Superb on his horse of bronze, Mohamed Ali dominates the grand Square, where all the busy life of the town concentrates. Some few steps further on another statue, this time a living one, caught my eye. On a beautiful well-groomed half-bred, an Egyptian cavalryman, erect and unmoving,

stiff in his sombre uniform, mounted guard. A finer soldier one could not wish to see. His bronzed skin, black moustache, dark eyes, slender body, straight and supple, made up the ideal of a cavalry soldier. It was with men such as these that the great Pasha made of Egypt a Power.

My thoughts are quickly disturbed. Across the Square, with the dull tread of marching feet, comes a company of English soldiers. They are boys, beardless boys, almost delicate looking, clad in unbecoming khaki, and their childish faces almost swallowed up in immense helmets. Can it be that these youths are the conquerors of this dark and warlike figure seated unmoved on his lovely steed?

D. Gardiner

SHOEMAKERS

Whilst the khaki-clad company file smartly past him, I take a keen look to see if any trace of feeling is shown on his dusky face. In vain, not a muscle moves; and if the sight of these foreign soldiers, trampling with their heavy boots the soil of his country, awakens in him any sense of bitterness, it is carefully hidden in a heart where for long the spark of patriotism has been if not extinct at least deeply hidden.

As I glanced once more towards the statue of Mohamed

Ali the thought struck me: if only your spirit could return and endow the bronze with life, what spasm of fury would seize you at the sight of these alien soldiers wending their way at your feet! But against whom should your wrath be hurled? Against the English, who have established order in Egypt, who have snatched the country from certain ruin, and who, by means of an extraordinary administration, wise, prudent and energetic, have assured her present, and, I dare hope, her future also; or against those fools, imbeciles, criminals, all that line of Pashas, greedy for gain and feeble of character, who, having sucked the land dry, threw her madly into the adventures of 1882?

David Gardiner

A COFFEE-SELLER

There can be no doubt that the interior situation of Egypt at that time was such that some kind of intervention on the part of the European Powers was absolutely necessary to re-establish order and protect foreign interests. But if this *Concert des Impuissances* had discussed and shuffled less, and had acted with a little more energy and decision, it is certain that the famous massacres of Alexandria and other events would have been avoided.

As to the massacres, they have been considerably exaggerated. A scuffle between an Arab and a Maltese, followed by a general row leading to a riot, in the course of which a band of Arabs

pillaged several houses and killed forty or so Europeans. Worse has happened in many a civilised town in Europe. It was in no sense a general rising against the foreigners, and the Egyptians themselves restored order. But whilst for weeks and months the Powers were discussing the best method of interfering in Egyptian affairs, and whilst France urged an Anglo-French military expedition, it is natural enough to find that the Egyptians wished to leave nothing to chance, and began therefore to take precautions.

The defences of Alexandria were put in order and the building of new forts commenced.

It was then that the French and English admirals summoned the Egyptian authorities to cease constructing all works, under pain of bombardment.

And now, as to subsequent events, we find two versions: the Egyptians declare that work was stopped; the English admiral, on the other hand, declares that, from reports received by him, he learnt that the Egyptians had mounted new guns in other positions. From whom did these reports come which decided Admiral Seymour to open fire? From a Scotchman, Mr. John Ross, who lived in Alexandria, and who supplied the two fleets with coal. Intimate with the admiral and the English officers, he kept them informed of all that took place on shore, and it was he who, in describing the new defences, more or less imaginary, was the cause of the bombardment. It was he also who, called in regard to coaling arrangements on board the French vessels, assured Admiral Seymour, up to the last moment, that the French were ready to back him up, and it was with the greatest astonishment that the latter saw the French squadron up anchor and go.

It is whispered in certain usually well-informed circles that, several hours after the bombardment, Admiral Seymour received orders from his Government not to open fire unless he considered his ships in danger from the new works made by the Egyptians, and that he passed a very bad quarter of an hour, wondering anxiously whether or not his action would be approved.

Few people are aware that Lord Kitchener, who, seventeen

years later, was to vanquish the Dervishes and reconquer the Sudan, was on board the flagship as a simple spectator. Immediately after the bombardment which opened Egypt to the English, he landed with Mr. John Ross, and going to his house indulged in a brandy and soda, just as he drank another with Captain Marchand at Fashoda on the morrow of the events which definitely assured the supremacy of England in the Valley of the Nile.

The bombardment was the first act, as Fashoda was the last, marking the decline of French influence, the decline which began on that memorable day when the French fleet disappeared on the horizon, and, abandoning Alexandria to the English cannon, carried with it the last hope of those who dreamt of an Egypt, great, strong and prosperous, under the guiding hand of France.

Al Vista

ON THE ROAD TO CAIRO

CHAPTER II

ALEXANDRIA TO CAIRO

Country villages and inhabitants—Story of the *ghamousah*—Curious sights, fortifications built to check the English army—Arabi's Revolution—Was he the cat's-paw of England ?—Condemned to death, reprieved, exiled to Ceylon, pardoned, and now living at Cairo on a pension of £1000 a year !—In the train—Anecdotes—Japanese and Egyptians—Why the latter, like the Turks, are pro-Japanese.

AT midday the assault on the express for Cairo takes place. The train is thoroughly up-to-date : corridor carriages of the most comfortable type, and a restaurant car of the International Sleeping Car Company. One might imagine oneself in Europe if it were not for the numerous passengers wearing the fez, the Arab passing us the *hors d'œuvres*, and above all the extraordinary racket made by the servants. Through the small opening by which the dishes are passed, the cooks and waiters apostrophise one another, dispute and discuss in an outlandish gibberish. This noise seems all the stranger as the Arab as a rule goes about his work almost as silently as a Chinese or Japanese. Their chief failing, however, is the insatiable curiosity which the presence of a white woman in the house arouses. To enjoy a glimpse of beauty unadorned in the form of a fair European, be she young and beautiful, or old and ugly, they have recourse to every ruse and every stratagem. The key-hole is the point of observation most in vogue, but when that has been carefully plugged by the

wily person *au courant* with their little ways, a hole drilled with a large gimlet in a quiet corner does equally well. The door of the bath-room is naturally most frequently threatened.

At my table, three gentlemen, each wearing the fez, and evidently well educated men, were discussing the Russo-Japanese War. I took part in the conversation, and had not done so long before I became aware that all three Orientals were strongly pro-Japanese. Questioned as to the reason for their feelings, one of them said to me:

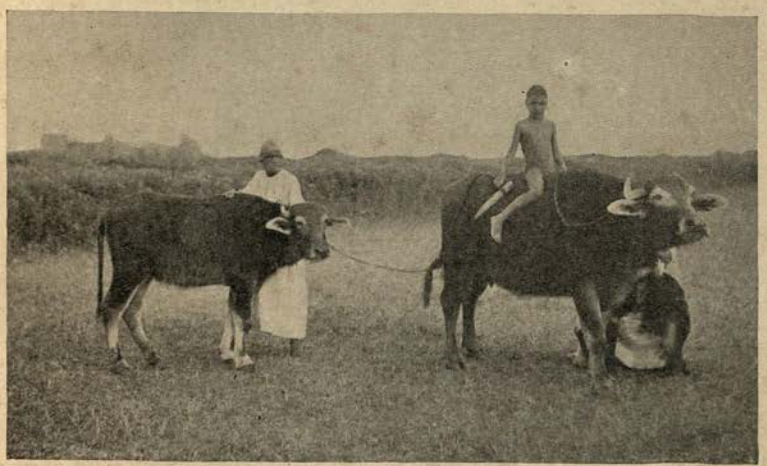
"We are pro-Japanese because the Japanese are an extraordinary people, young, brave, and full of energy, who have already done marvels, and who are struggling now for their existence." Undoubtedly these are good reasons, but there were others which he was careful to keep to himself, which I shall take the trouble to put into words for him: "We are pro-Japanese, we Mussulmans, Turks, Egyptians, because the Japanese are an Eastern people, whose religion is not that of Christ; because they are struggling against a nation which represents the two things in the name of which we have undergone most humiliation and most suffering, Western civilisation and the Christian faith."

That, in a word, is the thought of every Asiatic, every African; and the Japanese victories are awakening in Asia and Africa feelings which have long lain dormant,—the hope, lively but carefully hidden in their heart of hearts, that the day will yet dawn which shall see their final victory, and our final fall.

Moderate in speed, the train crosses the vast highly cultivated plains where the maize crop predominates. One might almost imagine oneself on the Western plains of America, if from time to time high palm-trees, like huge feathers, did not raise their tufted heads. Then there are the little villages of yellow mud-built huts, of which the flat roofs, covered over with thatch, serve as stable and poultry-yard; goats, sheep, chickens, dogs and pigs, all seem to prefer this exalted position, from which indeed the view is much finer than from below. Over the wretched roads come the camels, loaded in fearsome fashion, with step slow and measured, the head high and small, and the neck so long, so very long! The gravity of their

movements is in striking contrast to the paces of the asses, of which hundreds are to be seen. Ah! these Egyptian donkeys! How elegant they are, how smart, how full of life and grace, and how different from their European brothers! They have a chic indescribable, and to see them is to love them.

"What horrible cows!" cried a young American girl, pointing from the window of the carriage to some huge animals



Lekegian

GHAMOUSAHS

with black and glossy skins, whose looks were, in fact, rather repulsive.

"These are not exactly cows," explained an Egyptian. "That is the *ghamousah*, the female buffalo, whose milk is quite excellent. There is in our country a tradition that, after God had made the cow, the Devil, coming to have a look, burst out laughing, and declared that he could do better himself with his eyes shut. God took him at his word. The Devil set to work and produced—the *ghamousah!*"

The old Egyptian who related this little tale was a man of charming manners, and one who, some twenty years ago, played an important part in Egypt. Seated by my side, he drew my attention to many objects of interest.

"Do you see," he said to me, "these hillocks of sand? These are all that remain of the defence works erected by Arabi to stop the English in 1882. After landing at Alexandria it was thought that they would march directly on Cairo. But, as you know, they did no such thing. General Wolseley preferred to disembark at Ismailia, to the great surprise of the Egyptians, who believed firmly, after the words pronounced by M. de Lesseps, that France would not permit the English to enter the canal. At any rate, Wolseley's army, some 13,000 strong, with forty guns, landed at Ismailia on August 22, 1882, crossed without a hitch the thirty-six miles of desert, and on September 13 attacked the Egyptians entrenched at Tel-el-Kebir. We had 26,000 men and seventy guns, commanded by Arabi himself. Wolseley lost fifty men! Arabi was the first to decamp, followed by his broken army. He continued to run until he reached Cairo, where, as soon as the advance guard of the English cavalry appeared, he promptly surrendered."

ARABI

"To what do you attribute this ridiculous defeat?" I asked. "To the cowardice of the Egyptian troops?"

"Not a bit," he replied. "The best troops in the world will turn tail when their officers and their commander-in-chief decamp as if the devil were at their heels."

"Arabi had no military genius, he was simply a colonel, ambitious and vain, with a very ordinary intelligence, the man of straw. . . ."

"Of the English?"

"Ah! who knows? Personally I do not think so. He

played their game unconsciously, whilst doing the work of those equally ambitious but more intelligent than himself. Remember that the revolution of 1882 was a very serious affair, and a very excusable one. It was not at first against the foreigners, but against the Government, against the Turkish Pashas, who occupied almost all the high military and civil posts, and who were crushing the country under their despotism. With a leader more intelligent, and employing other means, the movement might have succeeded, and had the sympathy of the whole world. Arabi missed being a hero, he became simply a rebel."

"What has happened to him?"

At this question a smile came to his lips, and, with a roguish twinkle in his eyes, he replied:

"What has happened to him? Why, he lives in Cairo, happy and peaceful, on a pension of £1000 a year, generously granted him by the Government. Certainly it has not been granted to him for having raised a revolution, for having been, if not the leading spirit, at least the cause of the massacres at Alexandria, nor for having fled ignominiously at Tel-el-Kebir. But you must admit that, from the English point of view, the man who supplied a reason for the bombardment of Alexandria, who opened the doors of Egypt for England, and who, having at his disposal 26,000 men and seventy guns, only managed to kill fifty English, and allowed Cairo and its citadel to fall without a blow, is well worth a pension of £1000 a year. Think of the trouble England might have had, had he been made of other and sterner stuff."

"And from the Egyptian point of view?"

"Ah! from our point of view it would seem natural that we should hate and despise the man whose cowardice and incapacity have resulted in our country being now under the yoke of England . . . but, as a matter of fact, it is not so; for if apparently we have lost an independence which we really did not have, we much prefer to be governed by the English, thanks to whom Egypt has attained to a degree of prosperity hitherto unknown, rather than to be misgoverned by Turkey. That is quite worth the £1000 a year which we pay him *on the advice of England*."

"On the advice of England ?" I asked.

"Of course ! Ever since that day on which he surrendered at Cairo, Arabi, chief revolutionist, rebel against his Sovereign, has been taken by England under her wing. His trial was a farce, conducted not by the Egyptian judges, but by the 'counsel for the defence,' two English lawyers sent from London by means of a private subscription, and a third Englishman, Sir Chas. Wilson, representative in the Court, of England.

Lekegian

FRUIT-SELLER AT A RAILWAY STATION

Lord Dufferin, who had just arrived in Egypt as Special Commissioner charged with the task of Adviser to the Khedive, began by applying all his energies to better the condition of Arabi in prison. 'Sir,' he said one day to the Khedivial Councillor Borélli, 'I cannot allow Arabi to be treated with such cruelty. I have just been informed that there are holes in his mosquito-curtain !' Several days after, the ex-rebel having complained of the noise made by the sentries, which prevented him from sleeping, the night guard was immediately supplied with felt shoes ! But, in spite of all the English efforts, Arabi and four of his companions were condemned to death. England, however, would not permit the sentence to be carried out,

and the five prisoners were exiled to Ceylon, where for eighteen years they lived surrounded by every comfort . . . at the cost of the Government which they had tried to overthrow. 'But there was a revolution, they were rebels. We absolutely must hang some one, or what will become of the authority of the Government?' shouted Borélli. So they hanged three unfortunate devils, amongst whom was Commandant Soliman Sami, who acknowledged having with his troops set fire to certain buildings in the Square of Mohamed Ali, *under the orders of Arabi*, whilst he, pardoned and repatriated, lives at Cairo on a Government pension, and may be seen any day driving round at the fashionable hour."

D. Gardiner

A BIT OF COUNTRY

The old Egyptian ceased. Through the windows of the carriage the sunshine streamed as I reflected on my friends, the English, and their tenderness for rebels. Even the famous Colonel Lynch, who fought against them in South Africa, is to-day as free as Arabi, though, so far, I have not heard that the English Government has granted him a pension of £1000 a year.

Far off, in the plain, green and bathed in sunshine, a blare of trumpets sounded, and I perceived in the distance a company of infantry at exercise. Pointing to these splendid troops, I asked: "Are they worth more now than in the time of Arabi?"

"We have," he replied, "an admirable little army, of which England has as much right to be proud as we; for it is owing to the brilliant English officers who, in the last twenty years, have given themselves heart and soul to its regeneration, that Egypt to-day has an army worthy of it.

"I know that in recent years much criticism has been

directed in England against their army, against the Society life led by their officers, and their apparent ignorance.

Reiser

H.E. ABANI PASHA, WAR MINISTER

"It is not for me to offer any opinion. The young English officers are so active and so energetic that they must have continual occupation. They are splendid when the conquering of some savage country is in hand; but in London, what outlet have they for their energy but laying siege to the hearts of fair ladies? In Egypt, and now in the Soudan, a vast field has been opened for their activities. With untiring zeal, with unflagging patience, with admirable intelligence and extraordinary tenacity they have succeeded in giving to Egypt a new army, worthy of the warmest praise, and at a relatively small cost. In 1882, when Arabi was Minister of War, his Department cost Egypt almost £864,000. The English wisely considered that, for a country weighed down with debts, the first thing to be done was to reduce the expenses, and the War Budget was conse-

quently lowered each year, until in 1886 it amounted to £336,000. After that, as the prosperity of the country increased, the grants for the army were again raised, the Sudan re-conquered, the Dervishes annihilated, and yet, at the present day, our excellent army costs us less than the bands of Arabi. Amongst Europeans the belief seems general that the Egyptians, like the Chinese, will only fight well when commanded by European officers. . . . We Egyptians, however, like to think that to-day our soldiers would do their duty equally well when commanded by Egyptians."

This is undoubtedly the opinion of men in a position to know, and amongst these his Excellency Abani Pasha, the kind and charming Minister for War.

Three o'clock! The hundred and ten miles separating us from Cairo have been left behind, and now the Capital of Egypt rises up before us, a mass of white under a sky radiantly blue, sparkling with gold under the rays of a sun which, on this the first day of December, recalls the lovely days of May in France.

Al Vista

PLACE DE L'OPERA, CAIRO

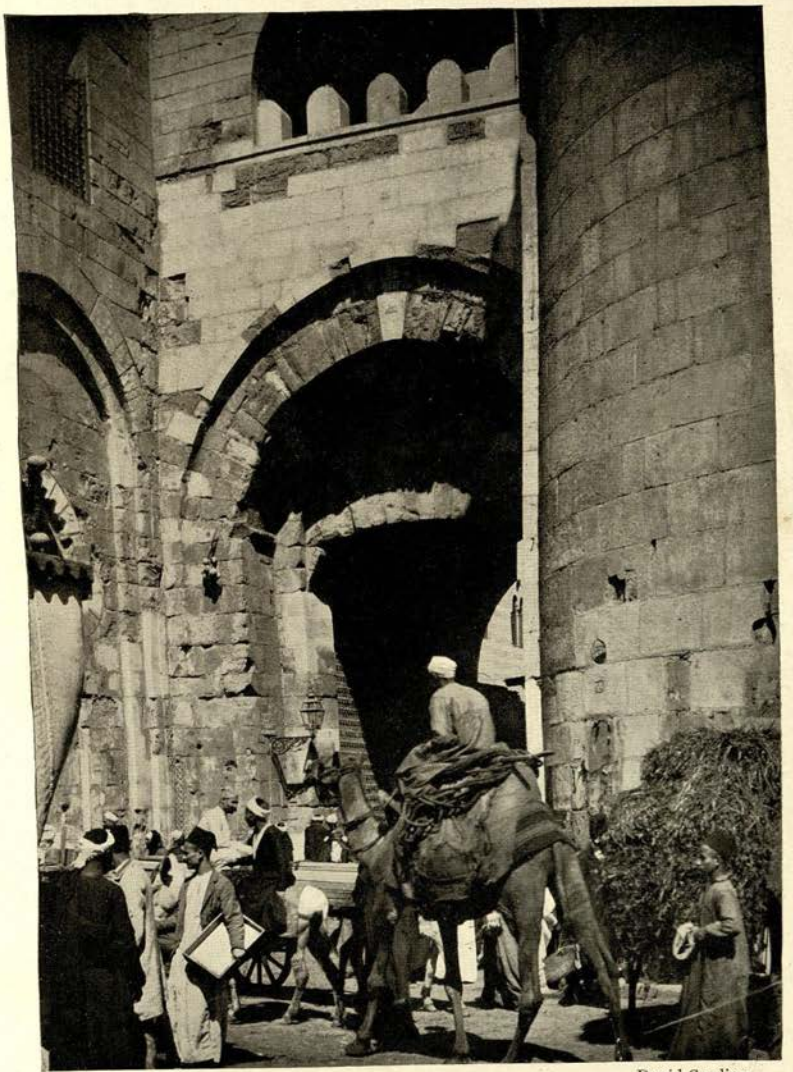
CHAPTER III

CAIRO

Arrival—Impressions—Population and types—The building mania—Extraordinary prosperity—Unheard-of riches—Life—The hotels—Napoleonic hotel-keepers—Stories and anecdotes—Tourists — Society, high and otherwise — Scandals — True history of certain great fortunes—Effect of climate on femininity and femininity on Arabs.

WHAT changes in the space of a few years! One hears of the mushroom growth of American towns, but where before has one seen an ancient Eastern capital suddenly take a fresh lease of life, born again, as it were, to a new existence, as if touched by a magic wand? At first sight the traveller who revisits Cairo after a few years' interval will not notice any great difference. At the huge station there is the same hurly-burly, the same cries, the same native porters seizing your luggage. On leaving, the same smell of the East, of the towns innocent of drains, the same terrible dust. But all this is soon forgotten, and one comes once more under the indefinable charm which enters into every traveller who finds himself in the midst of these new and strange scenes.

The principal street, Shariah-Kamel, and the Place de l'Opéra, have not greatly changed. This is still the liveliest corner of the town, where from morn to eve a huge and strange crowd presses and pushes its way along the pavements. It would be impossible, even in dreams, to picture anything



David Gardiner

GATE OF BAB EZ ZUWÊLEH, CAIRO

more animated than this living panorama, where East meets West, and meeting seems to mix one in the other.

The eye is first struck by the thousands of little red spots on which hang tassels of black silk. It is the fez, head-covering of so many different types that it seems as if all Africa had given rendezvous here. The majority are of the sterner sex, with nothing Oriental in their dress but the fez; otherwise they are clothed as the ordinary European, whilst many of them attain to the last thing in elegance.

In this extraordinary crowd are negroes, Arabs in their flowing robes, Jews with shifty eyes, eunuchs, Egyptian soldiers, well set up; and, making their way amongst all these Orientals, tourists of every country and speaking every tongue, young foreign girls with a knowing look about them, *mondaines* and *demi-mondaines*, the latter with a smile indifferently for black or white. Here and there a native woman, hidden beneath her veil, passes rapidly, silently, mysteriously.

The terraces of the *cafés* are crowded, and here one drinks the eternal Turkish coffee whilst smoking the eternal Egyptian cigarette. But to talk is difficult, for the street-hawkers make an unholy din. They sell everything. Nothing comes amiss: lottery tickets, post-cards, wax vestas, dates, fruits, newspapers, honey, even fish and meat. Some exhibit trained monkeys; others, Italians, scrape an outrageous fiddle; an army of boot-blacks swarms round; and also, as in front of the Grand Hotel in Paris, a crowd of guides, ready, for a few piastres, to show the stranger all the curiosities of Cairo. In the roadway also all is movement. Victorias with smart pairs, the little carts serving as omnibuses to the natives, some crowded with men, others with women and children, bicyclists, occasional motors, a countless multitude of donkeys ridden by every kind of two-legged being, camels loaded to within the last proverbial straw,—all these cross and re-cross without end. With an ear-splitting clang of bells, the electric trams remind us that Cairo is now a modern town. These tramways belong to a Belgian Company, who, whilst making a very good thing out of them, simply ignore the comfort of the public. The cars are dirty and the conductors uncivil. There is a compartment reserved for "ladies of the harem," but

foreign ladies are not permitted to use them. To sit next a flea-bitten negro is anything but pleasant, and in Alexandria, where first- and second-class compartments are provided, things are much better.

In the Shariah-Kamel, the Place de l'Opéra, and the neighbouring streets there are magnificent shops. The shop windows of the jewellers are particularly fine; perfumery and chemists' shops abound, but more numerous still are the cake-shops.

Dittrich

A NATIVE "OMNIBUS"

There you will find delicious nougat and "Turkish delight," but to get them you will have to search far; the whole of the fronts of the shops are invaded by Swiss chocolates. Gala Peter and milk chocolates have conquered Egypt with her sweet tooth.

Amongst the shopkeepers, the palm undoubtedly must go to the chemist. Their name is legion, and they grow fat in robbing a patient public with a most charming grace.* Their cynicism surpasses belief, and their business in life may be summed up as stealing always and poisoning often. Last winter, when a native child happened to be run over by a

* I should strongly recommend all travellers to carry with them any medicines they may be likely to require, especially as those may be had from Messrs. Burroughs and Wellcome in tabloid form, and will keep indefinitely.

carriage, the bystanders wished to carry the poor little creature into a chemist's shop; but the chemist, hard as it is to believe it possible, shut his door in their faces. The child died; if immediate help had been available he might have been saved, but—a native! What is that? And this chemist now continues happy and content to pocket his ill-gotten gains.

But if this corner of Cairo, so picturesque and lively, has not changed, it is not so with the rest of the town. The whole population seems to have been bitten with a mania for building. The streets are crowded with builders' carts, full of material, and on all sides, surrounded by scaffolding, are houses under construction. Huge flats, immense palaces, superb hotels have arisen where, a year or two ago, nothing but gardens were to be seen.

Egypt, at this moment, is passing through a period of great prosperity. Every one is coining money, and as the value of land and property is increasing daily, all those who have capital, and they are many, hasten to build.

A short time ago Egyptians of the middle-class were either ignorant of or indifferent to comfort. Families of twenty or twenty-five lived together in a miserable dwelling of a few rooms, in insanitary quarters. To-day all that is changed: families divide; the married children now wish a home of their own, choosing when they can the new parts of the town, healthy and airy. Thousands of persons who formerly slept on the floor of their rooms in the Turkish fashion, prefer now to have European beds, whilst knives and forks have replaced the more primitive instruments of thumb and forefinger.

The extraordinary growth of the town shows no sign of ceasing, and it still advances even into the surrounding desert, to the conquest of which energetic capitalists have set their minds. Boghos Nubar Pacha, son of the celebrated statesman, is at the head of a syndicate which has recently acquired huge tracts of land in the desert, at the gates of Cairo, where they intend to build a new quarter, which will, in time, be a small town in itself.

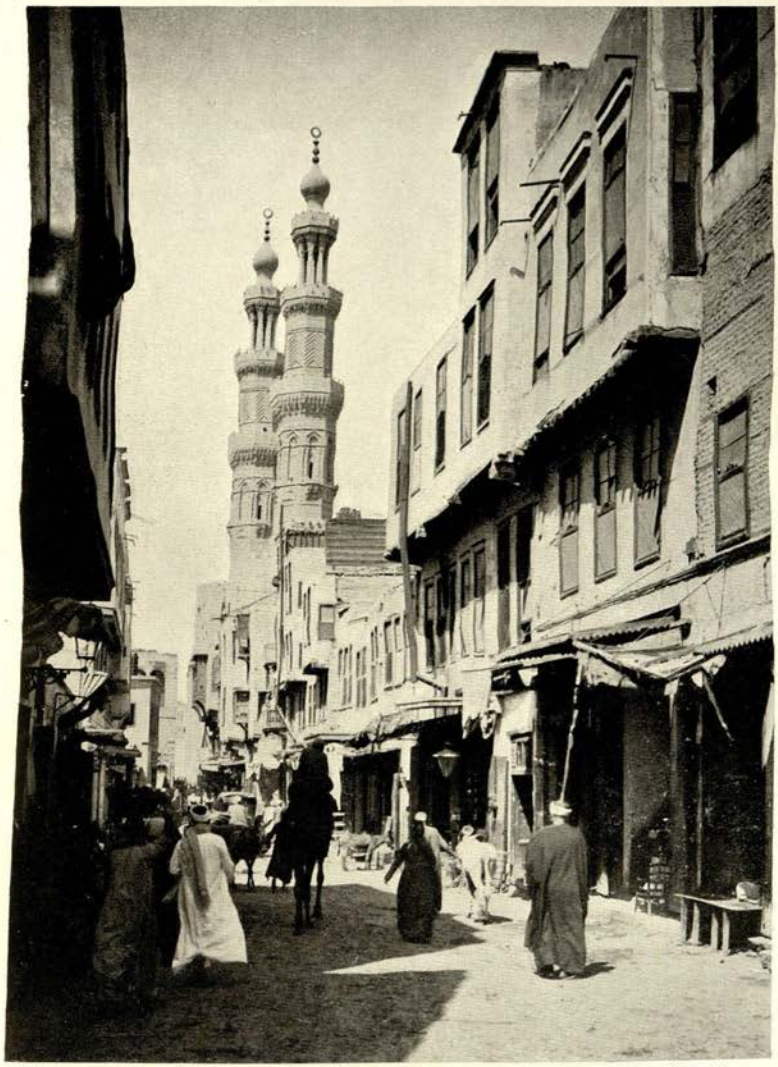
Two things above all Cairo formerly lacked, water and drains. I do not know if the latter will ever exist, but the question of the former, thanks to Messrs. Suarès, the wealthy bankers,

who have done so much for modern Egypt, has already been solved.

In 1898, having obtained a concession for supplying water to the town of Tantah, they brought over from Switzerland an engineer, M. Abel, of Zurich. This gentleman one day announced that, following on the observations he had made, he was convinced that under the Nile, at a great depth, and following the same course, there was another river, a second Nile, not a Nile thick and muddy, but a Nile made clear and pure by the beds of sand and other formations through which it had passed. Capital was wanted to make sure of the correctness of these theories, and to ascertain the quantity of water available, in good and bad years, from this underground river. Messrs. Suarès did not hesitate to supply the necessary funds, and the works then undertaken by M. Abel soon proved that he had not been mistaken. The subterranean Nile was proved to exist, its water to be excellent, and its volume sufficient to furnish drinking water, if necessary, to the whole of Egypt.

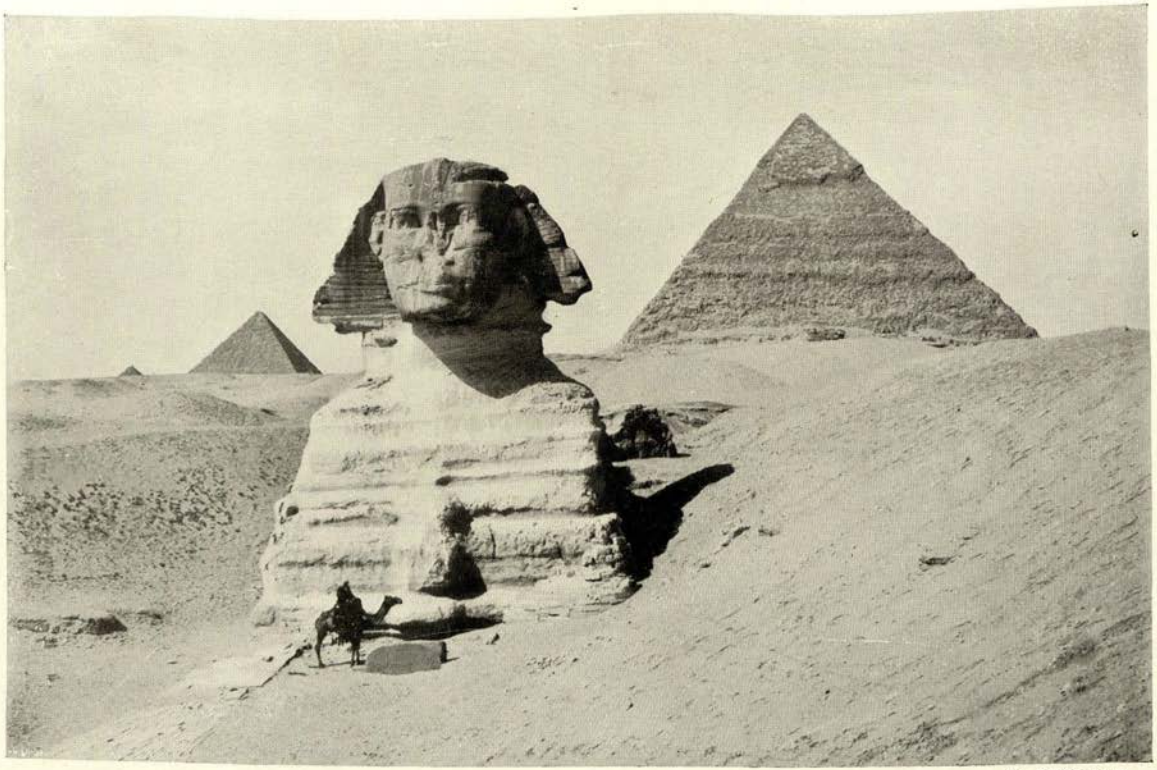
After Tantah and Mansourah, Cairo is to-day supplied almost entirely by the new Water Company, and now, in nearly every house, the turning of a tap is sufficient to obtain a supply of pure water *ad libitum*. Messrs. Suarès had the satisfaction, besides the very pleasant one of making money, of learning from the statistics of the Sanitary Department that in each of the quarters where the new water supply had been introduced the death rate had decreased enormously. One shudders at the thought that only yesterday the inhabitants of Cairo, rich and poor alike, were dependent on the muddy water of the Nile, brought to their doors in goat-skins by the Sakkas.

Strange as it may seem, this underground Nile, which comes from the depths of the Sudan to lose itself in the Mediterranean, is not the only river of its kind in Africa. Marquis di Rudini, the brilliant statesman who for so long and so often has directed the destinies of Italy, told me one day in Cairo that, in the course of his travels in Erythrea, he had been struck by the existence of several subterranean rivers. At the bottom of deep wells he had heard the sound of their



David Gardiner

SHARIAH EL TABBDUEH



David Gardiner

THE SPHINX AND PYRAMIDS

rushing waters. At that time neither the marquis nor I had heard of the underground Nile.

In the course of the following pages I shall have much to say of the charm of a winter sojourn in Egypt, and I can recommend that sojourn so warmly to all those who wish to pass the winter under the most comfortable conditions, in a country covered with historic relics and rich in artistic treasures, that I think I can be permitted, without fear of being accused of doing Egypt a wrong, to express the hope that a serious and sustained effort will be made to remove from Cairo the worst plague of the Land of the Pharaohs — the dust.*

David Gardiner

"SAKKAS" (WATER-SELLER)

And if for this the water supply of the town prove insufficient, then I trust other means will be tried to put an end to these whirlwinds of dust and filth, which are not only exceedingly disagreeable but positively dangerous.

When Cairo has less dust and some drains, when the trams are clean, the chemists more human, the drivers less brutal to their poor horses, and living a little cheaper, it will be a Paradise for the winter months.

During the few months which constitute the season, the

* It should be said, however, that the dust is not worse in Cairo than in many places along the French or Italian Riviera.

hotels are the centre of the fashionable world, and for the time Cairo approaches nearer to a *ville d'eau* than a capital. One must also recognise that these hotels have an irresistible attraction. Large and beautifully furnished, they combine the comforts of the West with the luxury of the East. It is only a few years since Cairo possessed only one really good hotel, Shepheard's, built in the centre of the town, in the middle of gardens which at one time formed part of the Palace of Princess Kiamil, daughter of Mohamed Ali. The place is historic, for the Princess, so it is said, was a modern Marguerite of Navarre, amorous, and lover of strong young men.

For many years Shepheard's was the meeting-place of all the best known people who passed through Cairo, and its name is a household word throughout the world. Its destinies are to-day in the hands of a man who knows his business well — M. Charles Baehler, who also manages the Ghezireh Palace. This Palace! what memories cling around it! In a few weeks, at the command of Khedive Ismail, and as if by magic, it rose from the ground, in the centre of the magnificent Ghezireh Park on the banks of the Nile, a fitting dwelling for its guest, the Empress Eugénie, who had arrived in order to be present at the opening of the Suez Canal. It was there that those *fêtes*, the finest the world has ever seen, had their being. What a setting for a hotel! Shepheard's and the Ghezireh, these two alone might have sufficed for the glory of hotel life in Cairo, or even in a town of ten times the size. But one day there arrived on the scene a man with brains, and the courage to back them, who said to himself: "That is very fine, that is very beautiful, but I am going to do something different and something better." And he built the Savoy Hotel. This man was George Nungovich Bey, the Napoleon of the Egyptian hotel industry, and to-day one of the most influential and richest men in Cairo.

M. CHARLES BAEHLER

"The Savoy," he declared, "will be the most chic and the most expensive in Cairo." But the prices, high as

they were, far from frightening tourists, seemed to attract them.

Besides the Savoy, M. Nungovich has in Cairo two other hotels, the Continental, in the Place de l'Opéra, and the Hôtel d'Angleterre, in a quieter situation, but quite up-to-date. M. Nungovich is a well-known figure in Cairo. Like many a millionaire he began life at the bottom of the ladder, in the hall of an hotel. Far from seeking to hide this, he is proud of it.

Dittrich

GHEZIREH PALACE HOTEL.

Some years after, several English officers, who had noticed his smartness and honesty, placed the management of their mess in his hands. Later he became director of the Hôtel d'Angleterre, and it was at this time that he rendered to the English army a service which the officers have never forgotten, and which created him, as it were, hotel-keeper by appointment to the officers of Her Britannic Majesty.

For some reason or another, an English regiment arrived unexpectedly at Cairo. No arrangements had been made to receive them, and no quarters prepared for the officers, who found themselves turned adrift. At the station they were surprised to find M. Nungovich, who informed the Colonel that he had prepared at the Hôtel d'Angleterre rooms for all the officers. During the few days of their stay they were royally entertained, and when, on leaving, they called for their bills, the reply was given, "There are none! M. Nungovich is only

too happy to have had the honour of entertaining Her Majesty's officers."

Nearly all the crowned heads who have passed through Cairo in later years have honoured M. Nungovich. The Queen of Portugal, at a picnic organised for her and her suite, invited him to her table. The story goes that when the Crown Prince of Germany arrived in Egypt, he noticed at the landing a small thin man, who, coming and going, seemed to direct everything. "That," he said, "must be the Prefect of Police, he ought to have a uniform!" It was M. Nungovich; and if he does not possess a uniform, he has at least a title and many decorations, of which he has reason to be proud.

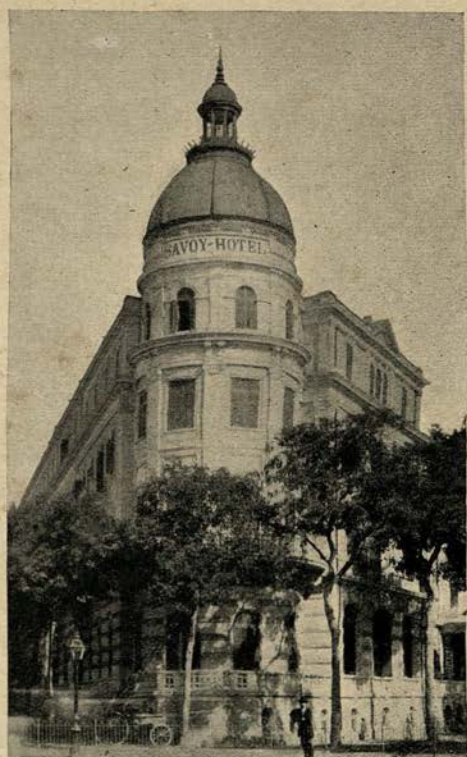
G. NUNGOVICH BEY

Naturally there is keen rivalry between the Hotels Baehler and the Hotels Nungovich; but this rivalry is healthy and all to the advantage of strangers, for in all of them everything possible is done to please and to earn their praise. Besides, this rivalry, more imaginary than real, is without cause nowadays, when these hotels have made their reputation and assured their future, and when other huge caravanserais are being built in all the quarters of the town to compete with the old-established houses.

As a matter of fact the hotels hardly suffice to lodge the enormous crowd of Europeans and Americans who flock to Cairo for the winter. Last season they were hard pressed to find lodgings for all, and I have been told that at one time the old sleeping-cars were requisitioned and played the *rôle* of improvised hotels. The people who thus invade Egypt represent what the hotelkeepers call "une clientèle de grand luxe." One must, in fact, have money and plenty of it to pass the winter in Egypt, and those who come from all the corners of the earth to enjoy the delicious climate have a long purse and spend with a free hand. Luxury and display, an uninterrupted succession of balls and *fêtes*, such is the life of Cairo in winter.

There is something in the air of Egypt, a something which seems to excite every one, more or less, which almost

maddens certain natures, especially of the weaker sex, and which seems to drive them to a continuous pursuit of all the pleasures of the senses. The result is that all the world flirts, and the most extraordinary stories run the round of the hotels. Young girls seem to have a very pronounced weakness for the Egyptian, a weakness which sometimes seems to lead to an entire absence of any idea of *les convenances*. A young Egyptian, glib of tongue and an excellent dancer, once said to me :



DOME OF THE SAVOY HOTEL

"I assure you I could write a volume of adventures which come the way of us young Egyptians in winter, and the way in which these young girls throw themselves at our heads would astonish the world. Several of us, for sport, formed a society which we called the 'terrassiers,' because we 'did' the terraces of the various hotels; but it was no use, we had to give it up; no constitution could stand the success which crowned our efforts."

But the adventures of these young blades pale before those of the Dragomans, these splendid men, built like Hercules, strong as horses, and so picturesque in their native costume. Their duty is to serve as guide and interpreter, to organise everything for their masters, excursions and parties of all

sorts. Like the Arabs, the Egyptians, and all the Orientals from the lowest to the highest, the Dragomans are mad where a European or an American woman is concerned. For them they represent the acme of sexual attraction, and, at least for the lowest class, age and looks are quite unimportant. One can then perhaps understand, if not forgive, the woman whose looks have suffered from the passing of the years, or who, born with a lack of the fatal gift, has lingered long in the cold shades of neglect, seizing eagerly the opportunity of becoming an object of adoration, in engaging an Egyptian Dragoman.

A DRAGOMAN

Whilst writing these lines I have in my mind a charming blonde who for several years has wintered in Egypt with her rich but invalid husband. They possessed one of the finest Dragomans in the country; and such was the conduct of Madame with this Hercules, that an English chaplain did not hesitate to preach a violent sermon in his church on the subject, which was "understanded of the people."

Every day, on the road to the Pyramids, there is to be seen a smart victoria and pair with a magnificent coachman on the box, his fez cocked rakishly on one ear, a flower in his button-hole, and his face shining with satisfied vanity. Why not? The noble lady, seated majestically in the carriage, and whose beauty is passing ripe, is his mistress in more senses than one.

Speaking of Dragomans reminds me of a story of the director of one of the hotels, a good Alsatian but "a little slow in the uptake," as they say in Scotland. One evening, a young

American girl, whose reputation was not of the best, rushed into his office and said : " Monsieur, I absolutely must have a *mousquetaire* in my room to-night ! " The director raised his hands in astonishment and cried: " But, Mademoiselle, where the devil do you imagine I can get one ? . . . Dragomans, yes, as many as you wish, but a *mousquetaire*—at Cairo ! " Collapse of the lady, who desired nothing more than a *moustiquaire*.

The way in which foreigners seize on all occasions an opportunity of cultivating their French is most amusing, but, fortunately for them, they are as a rule blissfully unconscious of the extraordinary things which they occasionally say.

At one of the most brilliant of last season's balls, on a very warm night, after a mad waltz, a young diplomatist led his partner, a charming Californian, on to the balcony. When they had reached the open air, wiping his brow with his handkerchief, he cried, " Quelle chaleur ! " With the most innocent air in the world, and fanning herself vigorously, the charming creature replied, " Oui, vraiment, et moi aussi je suis en chaleur ! "

It was this same young lady who, that winter, introduced tobogganing into the Ghezireh Palace. One evening, in the grand hall at the foot of the immense staircase, a young Englishman, newly arrived from Switzerland, was boasting to a group of charming girls of the joys of winter sport, and especially the delights of tobogganing, and told them how, in a few minutes, one could do the run from the Palace Hotel at Caux down to the Grand Hotel at Territet.

" Oh, that is nothing ! " cried Miss B. " We have tobogganing here, and without any risk of getting our noses frost-bitten." Calling an Arab, she demanded a tray. A few moments after, seated on this improvised toboggan, she shot down the marble stairs like an arrow. The sport caught on at once, and, for many evenings after, ladies in evening dress might have been seen tobogganing gaily down the staircase, whilst, at the foot, a regiment of black-coats with wide-opened eyes enjoyed the unusual and piquant sight. Ah ! these hotels ! I can guarantee you need not be bored.

Besides the rich clique of the hotels, Cairo society has others,

of which the most important are the "Official," the "English," and the "Native." It is difficult to give to the last a suitable name. It is composed of all the foreign families, rich and hospitable, for the most part Greeks and Levantines, settled in Egypt for many years, and in whose hands are most of the large commercial and industrial concerns, as also, in a special degree, the financial. They possess magnificent houses, almost palaces, and live in the greatest luxury. There are in this group many charming women, very interesting and decidedly elegant, whilst the men are remarkable for their intelligence. The origin of many of these fortunes, though not unknown or even forgotten, is wisely hidden by a thick veil, which old residents occasionally amuse themselves by lifting for the entertainment of curious persons like myself. Then it is that they tickle your ears with stories of which the heroes, bearers of names well known and respected, proud of their titles and decorations, strong in their relationships and friends, appear in the early stages of their careers as nothing more nor less than robbers, smugglers and coiners.

Charming, indeed, is the tale of the bad Egyptian coins of which millions, stamped in Europe, entered Egypt in the hollow legs of iron bedsteads. When the Government, unable longer to recognise its own money, decided to issue a new coinage, and when the coiners, in too great a hurry, put into circulation their imitations of the new money before the real coins had been issued by the Government, the Minister of Finance was obliged to declare that the new money issued was not his, and that he was quite unaware of where it had come from.

Then there is the story of the foreign Consul, poor as a church mouse, who one fine day locked up a whole family of his own compatriots, a family immensely wealthy, whose little crimes he had found out, but whom he released at dawn, one does not of course know quite why—but the poverty-stricken Consul sent in his resignation, and is to-day the proprietor of several of the finest villas in one of the most charming spots on the Adriatic. Nice little tale, is it not? But after all, what does it matter? The elders, those who have struggled and succeeded at a time when every one robbed more or less, are

Beresford

LADY CROMER

to-day very old. To-morrow they will have gone, and another generation, well brought up, highly educated, elegant, fashionable to the tips of their fingers, will not be responsible for the kind of money which their fathers used. Do not let us dig too deep. Out of a dunghill a rose may grow—and many another beautiful thing. And besides, as every one knows, money has no smell, and less even in Egypt than elsewhere.

The English clique (I do not refer here to the official world), numerous and important, look down with contempt on the native families. In their eyes, Egyptians, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, all are niggers. I am not joking, and, extraordinary as it may seem, Englishmen, intelligent, educated and charming, will speak of a Greek as "that black man," or "that nigger." And there is no way of changing them.

Looked down upon in its turn by the official clique, the English colony suffices unto itself and lives, as it were, cut off, enjoying all the sports on which it dotes. It drives, rides, sails, it has football, tennis, polo, and remains happy, contented and healthy.

The official world is pretty much what it is in all the capitals where foreign Powers are represented, and where the head of the country has ministers and officers of all kinds, and in his family princes and princesses. Lord Cromer and his charming young wife are not, perhaps, quite worldly enough to please every one; but every work, be it artistic, literary or charitable, every effort to better the condition of the people, finds in them a ready help.

At the French Legation, a palace in the purest Arabic style, M. de la Boulinière, a diplomatist of sterling worth, looks strenuously after the interests of his country, whilst Madame and Mesdemoiselles de la Boulinière give all the time which social duties allow to these numerous and worthy works of charity with which the name of France has always been associated.

The doyen of the Diplomatic Corps, M. von der Does de Willebois, son of the celebrated Dutch statesman, is almost as popular as his wife, a perfect bridge-player, or his daughters, keen sportswomen; and that is saying much.

The Marquis Salvaggo Raggi, representing Italy, was at

Pekin at the time of the Boxer troubles and the siege of the Legations, whence he returned with an unlimited admiration for the administrative qualities of the English and Japanese, whom he had observed working side by side with the other nationalities. The marquise, a beautiful woman, is one of the most sought after and admired in Cairo.

Dittrich

MADAME DE MARTINO

In another gem of Arabic art, the Danish Legation, under Count de Zogheb, is a fashionable centre, presided over by the countess and her charming daughter.

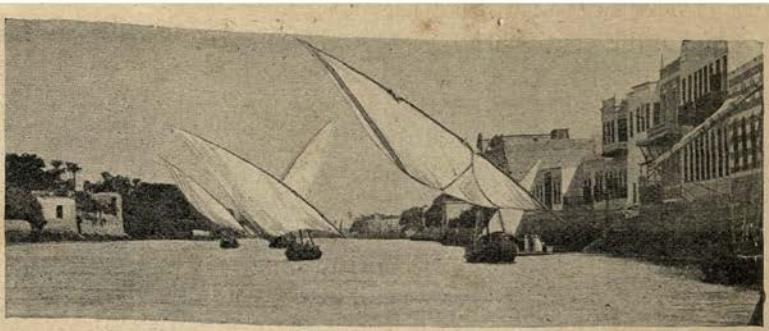
Then there are the bachelors, Count T. B. de Koziebrodzki, the Austrian Hungarian Minister, just arrived, but who has already succeeded, so they say, in capturing all the feminine hearts and not a few of the masculine. Baron Oppenheim, a writer and a savant, whose old Arab palace contains many a treasure, artistic and literary—not to mention some delicious liqueurs and enormous cigars!

But there is a limit to the pages which I could devote to Cairo and its society. I should like to describe many a salon, to talk of many a *mondaine*, but time and space forbid. I cannot, however, finish without a mention of the salon of Madame de Martino, lady of honour to her Highness the Khedivah, a lady of perfect charm, and one of the best of hostesses.

And in this continual round of *fêtes* and pleasures, of dinners, balls, and suppers, all the world of Cairo and his wife amuse themselves and flirt. As to this flirtation, I am convinced that in no other city in the world does it play so large a part; and yet, it seems, I was not there at the proper time. I left too soon. Winter, it seems, is nothing compared with spring, when, as we know, a young man's fancy lightly turns. . . .

"I am leaving Cairo," a friend of mine wrote me in April, a lady whom one could not describe as a prude, "I am leaving Cairo, for I cannot stand any longer the sight of these eternal couples, who, now that the hot weather has come, seem to have lost all notion of *les convenances*."

Well, *chère amie*, we must not be too hard on poor Cairo. Spring is the great sinner in all lands; and if he seems somewhat more alive there than elsewhere, is it his fault, is it not rather the fault of the climate and the sun?



Al Vista

NILE AT CAIRO

CHAPTER IV

RESURRECTION

The resurrection of a country—Prosperity of Egypt explained—Lord Cromer's work—What Egypt owes to England—What England obtains from Egypt—Comparison between 1882 and 1905—The opinion of the Prime Minister, his Excellency Moustapha Fehmy Pasha—Sir William Garstin—The work of a great engineer—Egyptian finance—The banks—Speculations—Messrs. Suarès, Cassel, &c.—The dance of the millions—History of the Daira, the Assouan Dam and the National Bank

"England has rendered an undoubted service to the cause of civilisation."—DE FREYCINET, *La question d'Egypte.*

ONE cannot judge and dismiss in a few lines the admirable work of England in Egypt during the last twenty-three years. To those who wish to know it in all its details I should advise the reading of Lord Cromer's annual reports, which can be procured in London for a few pence. These are not simply pages full of figures and statistics, tending to prove that what has been done has been done well. The reader will find, on the contrary, in these reports, written in simple, clear and vigorous language, a story, alive, interesting and fascinating, of Egyptian progress in the last quarter of a century, of errors committed and quickly rectified, and of successes obtained. I have read several volumes of these reports, some thousand large quarto pages, and my interest was as great at the end as

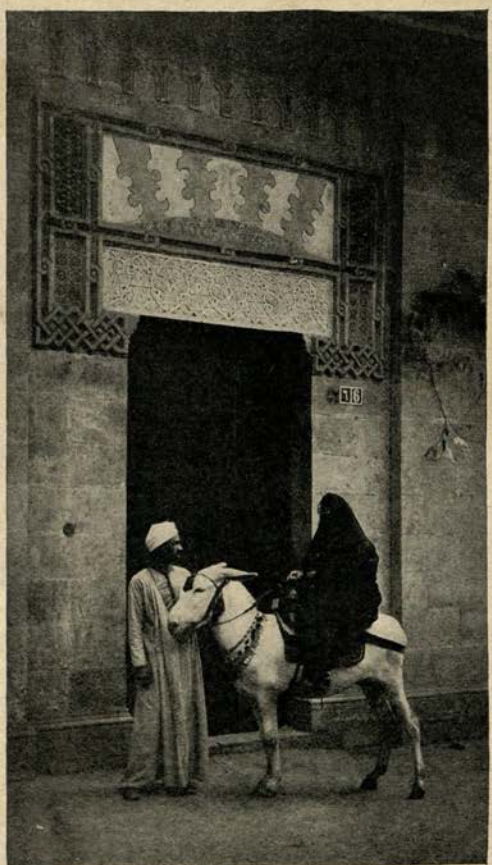
at the beginning. These reports, in themselves, are a work of the greatest value, of which Lord Cromer, were he less modest than he is, would have every reason to boast. Thanks to them I obtained a clear idea of the situation of Egypt, past and present, the efforts accomplished, and the future schemes, the *rôle* of England, the moral, mental and physical state of the population, and a thousand and one things of interest as regards the life of the country and its inhabitants. Events are treated with impartiality, and Lord Cromer does not hesitate under certain circumstances to repeat the criticisms delivered with regard to certain acts of the Government, whilst explaining clearly his reasons for them. The reports are read with the greatest interest by the Egyptians themselves, and the local papers quote them *in extenso*.

In the course of several conversations which I had with him, and before I had read his reports, Lord Cromer did me the honour of explaining the situation. His Excellency has the reputation of being brusque and of having a cold manner. On the contrary I found him on every occasion most courteous, pleasant and agreeable. His voice is soft, his manner simple, and his personality charming. He is not a man after the heart of an interviewer. If he allows *one* question, it is useless to ask *two*. Either he simply refuses an answer, or in a few words he will tell you everything which concerns the question in which you are interested. From the first, he grasps exactly what you desire to learn, and if he vouchsafes a reply it is given clearly and without any superfluous words. It is best to go straight to the point, and he will do the same. I shall not seek to expound on the political and financial situation of Egypt since 1882. I shall content myself with showing the results obtained.

At the time of the events of Alexandria and the defeat of Arabi, Egypt was, so to speak, bankrupt. Her debts amounted to over one hundred millions sterling, and her income was not sufficient to pay the interest and supply the necessary funds for Government. The fellaheen, or peasants, representing the great majority of the people, were crushed by the taxes, ill-treated by the Pashas, and reduced to a state of abject misery. All the offices were in the hands of men who sought by every means in their power to enrich

themselves, whilst the administration in all its branches was corrupt, incapable and rotten.

To-day we find Egypt well-governed and prosperous, in a condition financially which might be envied by many a great Power. The Government, honest, firm, enterprising, enjoys the confidence of high and low, foreigner and native. The fellaheen, released from excessive taxation, work hard, are happy and prosperous.



David Gardiner

ARAB WOMAN AND DONKEY-BOY

The revenue of the Government, which in 1882 amounted to £9,000,000, last year reached almost £14,000,000, whilst, notwithstanding numerous most important works which have been undertaken, the last Budget showed a surplus of £1,200,000. At the same time the sinking funds of the Government showed a total of £13,400,000. And these millions have been saved whilst taxation has been reduced, and enormous works and costly enterprises undertaken by different branches of the Government.

The opinion in Egypt is unanimous in declaring that this excellent state of things is due to England. I believe that it

is due, above all, to Lord Cromer. Having placed the lot of Egypt in the hands of a man capable beyond others of saving the country and in whom they had absolute confidence, the English Government had the good sense to give him a free hand, and to leave him alone, simply letting the world know, from time to time, that behind him and his acts stood the British Empire. Even in the darkest days when Gordon was murdered at Khartoum, when the Sudan passed entirely into the hands of the Dervishes, even then England would not disavow by a single word a single act of her representative. Instead of attempting to direct or thwart his schemes, the English Cabinet based its entire Egyptian policy on the foundation which Cromer had laid, and on which, little by little, arose the edifice the solidarity and permanence of which London has never doubted. What a lesson for those countries whose representatives are at the mercy of the whim of a Minister, the interpellation of a deputy, or a campaign of the Press!

Certainly Lord Cromer has not entirely and with his own hands created the present situation. Egypt owes much to the international institutions which the Powers have created, the Caisse de la Dette, which for many years acted as a brake on the finances, and the Mixed Tribunals, which, dispensing for the first time equal justice, and in making the law respected, established order and confidence. Egypt owes much to France, from whose breast she has imbibed the best of her civilisation and the ideas of her best institutions.

But to Lord Cromer is the glory of having brought order out of chaos, of having re-organised the services, of having purged the administration of its vices, of having established a Government at once homogeneous and honest, of having had accomplished or commenced all these immense works which are to-day, and will be even more in the future, the fortune of the country. In a single word, he and he alone has known how to unite, concentrate and apply all the resources of the land to the regeneration of its inhabitants.

In the simplest of language Lord Cromer explains to what point the first effort has advanced: "The resources of Egypt lie almost entirely in her agriculture, and that again depends on two things, the labour of the peasant and the rising

of the Nile, whose fertilising waters overflow each year the cultivated fields, supplying them at the same time with moisture and manure. For years the peasant hardly worked, as all the fruit of his labours was snatched from him by the tax-collectors, who left him little or nothing, making him disgorge his last penny by blows or, if necessary, by torture. One can hardly conceive the sufferings and privations which the unfortunate people underwent. The water of the Nile itself was monopolised by the rich Pashas, the powerful landowners, and against them it was impossible for the poor peasant to obtain justice. The first effort was made to reduce taxation, to distribute it in a fashion at once just and equitable, to protect the fellaheen from robbery, official or otherwise, and ultimately to assure to him his share in the water of the Nile, at all times and in all places. Time and patience, a great quantity of both, were necessary to convince the unfortunate peasant that a new era of justice had at last arrived; but little by little he began to understand, until at last, though still suspicious, he set himself to work. When, in the course of time, he found that after many years he could now enjoy in comfort and in peace the fruits of his toil, then and only then did the deep-born love of the soil reassert itself, and he became, though, alas, how little! more human, found once more his long-lost energy, and Egypt began to revive."

The encouragement and protection afforded to the fellaheen was extended, in one way or another, to the other classes of society. I shall content myself with giving a few examples. The Nile, being the great artery of the country, passing from end to end, and having on either side the cultivated land, the greatest asset and the greatest wealth of Egypt, serves naturally as the means of transport for most of the agricultural produce. Innumerable sailing boats serve for this traffic, and thousands of families thereby earn a living. Taxes without number crushed these unfortunate boatmen, but the most iniquitous of all was that which obliged them to pay a certain sum each time they passed one of the bridges. Pedestrians, carriages, flocks, cattle, for whose benefit these bridges had been mostly built, paid nothing; whilst the unfortunate boatmen, stopped for hours by the bridges, too low to permit of their passing beneath,

Dittrich

THE EARL OF CROMER

sometimes lost entire days, and when at last a passage was opened for them they had to pay for the privilege. It was stupid and shameful, but this tax brought in a considerable sum. Lord Cromer did not hesitate to abolish it completely. There were other taxes, almost as iniquitous, amongst which were those affecting the fishermen, by whose labour part of the population was fed; but these have all been abolished.

All these acts of justice resulted in confidence being restored, and from this confidence sprang the new era of work and prosperity which Egypt to-day enjoys. Lord Cromer has had the gift to choose, and the good fortune to find, assistants of first-rate quality. Certainly Egypt is governed by his Highness the Khedive and a Council of Ministers. At the head of each of the Ministries is a distinguished Egyptian statesman, to whom is attached an Under-Secretary. The latter is an Englishman, who is in fact inspired and directed by Lord Cromer, the moving spirit.

It would be a great mistake to suppose that the Egyptian Ministers are simple figure-heads, pocketing their large salaries and doing nothing. They are, as it were, the connecting links, necessary and indispensable, between Egypt and England, between the Egyptian people and their English advisers. It is through them that England governs, or, to use a less diplomatic phrase but perhaps more just, they govern in the name of their Sovereign, following the advice of Lord Cromer, transmitted through their English advisers. Almost all of these advisers have been men of remarkable character and intelligence. The names of many of them will be written in letters of gold on the pages of the history of modern Egypt, along with that of Lord Cromer. The Financial Adviser is considered generally to be the most important Ministerial personage. This post has been occupied successively by Sir Edward Vincent, Lord Milner, Sir Aukland Colvin, Sir Eldon Gorst, Sir Edwin Palmer, and finally by the present occupant, Sir Vincent Corbett, a valuable authority on finance.

At the Ministry of Public Works Egypt and England were fortunate when, at the side of the talented Minister, His Excellency Fakry Pasha, they placed one of the greatest engineers of our time, and one of the most gifted men, Sir

William Garstin. His study and his work on the huge river which, rising in the centre of the Dark Continent, supplies the life-blood of Egypt, have placed him far above all the men of science who before him or with him have occupied themselves with these questions. I shall refer later on, in another chapter, to the works already accomplished and to those contemplated by Sir William Garstin; but I should like to explain briefly here that the present-day prosperity of Egypt would not exist, notwithstanding the reformed and honest administration given by Lord Cromer, without these works, thanks to which the *one and only source of wealth*, the Nile, wayward and uncertain, has been conquered, its volume considerably increased, and its delivery so admirably controlled that its fertilising waters moisten the soil each summer at a time when formerly there was not a drop to be obtained.

Elliott and Fry

SIR VINCENT CORBETT

For the Nile has always been the best friend and the greatest enemy of the fellaheen. Without it Egypt, deprived of water (the rainfall is almost nil), would be a barren and uninhabitable desert. Even yesterday, if, at the time of the annual flood, the river was too low, large tracts of land remained unwatered, and their owners were reduced to misery; whereas, if it were too high, its waters, rushing furiously over the irrigation canals, ruined almost the whole of the country. At the time of the floods, the entire river-side population passed its nights watching the defence works, ready to strengthen the walls where most threatened; but in this struggle for existence victory rested many times with the river, and the man, vanquished, could

only await the returning season, gnawing the crusts that were left him.

To-day all that is altered, and the Nile, followed, studied, from its source in Darkest Africa to its outfall in the Mediterranean, is firmly held in hand. The works already executed are such that the lands under cultivation are never without water even in the leanest years, whilst any possible mischief is quickly mastered when an extra high flood threatens to break

David Gardiner

THE NILE

down the defences. When one considers that not an acre of land would be productive did the Nile not supply it with its precious waters, and that Egypt is, in consequence, a long and narrow valley of irrigated land, bordered by unproductive desert, which, however, could also be brought under cultivation as far as the water could reach, one can understand that the more water the Nile has to dispense, the more extensive will be the area cultivated, the greater the agricultural wealth of the people, and consequently the more productive the revenue of the Government. I believe, therefore, that I am justified in saying that the efforts of the Ministry of Public Works have been directed and continue to be directed towards the following ends :

(1) To give to each farmer in the cultivated zone or in the zone which it is possible to cultivate the water to which he has a right, be he rich or poor, humble or powerful.* (2) To control the volume of water by means of immense dams. (3) To extend the network of irrigation canals to the regions still uncultivated. (4) To increase the volume of water, either by preventing all possible loss from the source onwards, or by diverting from their beds other rivers, in the region of the equatorial lakes, which at present flow in a different direction. (5) By the creation of huge reservoirs, containing millions of cubic metres of water, to store water at the time of the flood, which, during the dry season, can be released, and which will enable crops to be raised at a time when formerly the land lay in enforced idleness, useless and unproductive.

This brief account gives but a faint idea of the immensity of the task which, covering each square yard of arable land in Egypt, stretches back into the depths of the Sudan, a length of over 4000 miles, to the sources of the White Nile in Central Africa, and of over 400 miles more to the sources of the Blue Nile on the elevated plateaux of Abyssinia.

All these works are well in sight, whilst the huge reservoir of Assouan, the work of Sir William Garstin, completed some five years ago, has already proved for the whole of Egypt a source of incalculable wealth. I repeat for Egypt, and not for England, for it is the welfare of the first and not of the second which Lord Cromer has always in view. His Excellency has many times said: "I have considered always, and before everything else, the interests of Egypt, and the welfare of her people. In every case where it was necessary to decide on a question in which English and Egyptian interests clashed, I have never hesitated to decide in favour of the latter. England has never attempted to profit by her presence here to obtain personal advantages, or to favour her subjects at the expense

* I am not an engineer, and am unversed in technical matters. I shall try simply to give an explanation for the benefit of those who are ignorant of these most interesting questions. I make my apologies to Sir William Garstin if I have forgotten any important points, or confused in any way the lucid explanations which he so very kindly gave me.

of those of other nationalities. The same protection is extended to all. All honest endeavour, whatever it may be, or wherever it may come from, is treated with the greatest consideration. The English Advisers are the servants of the Khedive; they do his work for his country and not for their own."

To be sure, in the long run England benefits also, since in an Egypt rich and prosperous she has a large market for her goods, a magnificent training ground for her officers, her savants, and her young officials, whilst, more important still, she has the certainty that nothing menaces the Suez Canal, the great artery of the world's commerce. To gain the confidence of the country in proving that she governs for its interests and not for her own, that in a sentence is the keynote of British policy in Egypt.

An immense majority of Egyptians appreciate thoroughly England's work, and the number of the grumblers is so insignificant that their existence would be unnoticed were it not that they number amongst them certain journalists, native and foreign, good debaters and glib talkers, who excel in the art of making a mountain out of a molehill.

Then, amongst the younger generation, there are those who, more or less brilliantly, have finished their studies, and who, forgetful of the early days of struggle, seeing only the present-day prosperity, say to themselves: "This machine is simplicity itself, why may we not work it?" Alas! to how few of these to-day could the reins of government be safely trusted! The Egyptians are still like plants which without support cannot be expected to grow straight.

One of the men who knows them best said to me: "Twenty years ago, I thought it would have been sufficient to educate them. I was wrong, it is their entire character which must be altered."

The clear-seeing amongst the Egyptians themselves understand that this is the case, and none better than his Excellency Moustapha Fehmy Pasha, President of the Council and Minister of the Interior, a man who, under a manner of extreme simplicity, hides remarkable talents, and whose counsels have been of inestimable value to England, as Lord Cromer has been

quick to acknowledge. "The work of England here," his Excellency said to me, "is a monument to her glory. Look at what Egypt was in 1882, and what it is now! Then, anarchy, misery, ruin; now, order, justice and prosperity. I have seen both, and I am able to make comparisons. The change has been so rapid, so thorough, that sometimes I could shut my eyes and ask myself—Is it not all a dream? The greatest wonder, however, is the way in which England, in such a short time, has made herself respected, appreciated, and not only supported, but recognised as indispensable. It does not do to forget that she entered Egypt by force, breaking down the doors by cannon balls, in fact as an enemy. Think of the tact she must have employed to have settled herself down amongst us with hardly a hitch, hardly an unpleasantness. I do not believe there is another Government in existence whose machinery works more smoothly than ours. You ask me if Egypt will one day be able to do without England? That is a delicate question, and one which time alone will answer. But this much I can say, that at the present moment we cannot do without her. The work is far from being finished; the foundations have been solidly laid, the building is rising full of promise. . . . But the point has not yet been reached when it can be left to its own resources. Of what can we complain in regard to England? To her we owe our wealth and our prosperity, she has treated us with a consideration and a justice to which none of the great Powers had accustomed us."

Dittrich

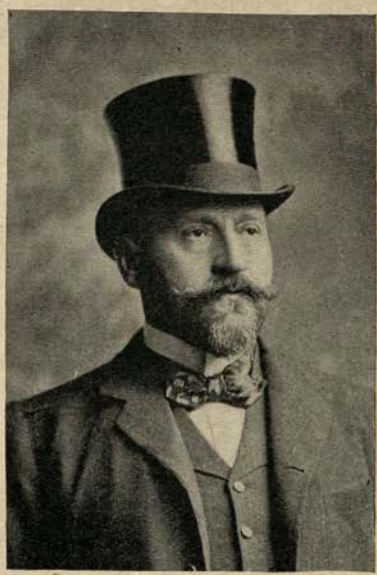
H.E. MOUSTAPHA FEHMY PASHA, PRIME MINISTER

Sanderson

VIEW OF THE CITADEL

It is in talking with men like his Excellency that one arrives at a comprehension of all the difference between the past and the present.

"Look," he said to me one day, "at that land covered with hotels and palaces, sprung from the ground as if by magic. Twenty years ago one might have offered it for nothing, and no one would have accepted, for it was not worth the amount of the taxes which one would have had to pay. To-day it is worth millions sterling, but what would it be worth to-morrow if England quitted Egypt?"



Lafayette
SIR ERNEST CASSEL

And to my question as regards the capacity of the younger generation, he replied:

"Great progress has been made. Morally and physically our youth is much superior to that of the last two generations. But we are still in a state of transition. Not to-day, not even in the near future, shall we be able to find amongst ourselves *all* the elements necessary for the administration, the guiding and directing, of a great and rich nation."

Since confidence was restored, foreign capital has flowed into Egypt, where opportunities of placing it favourably are numerous. Naturally the English were the first to have a finger in the pie, but the importance of their capital invested was considerably less than that of France, until the time when one of the most famous English capitalists, Sir Ernest Cassel, suddenly appeared on the banks of the Nile. With M. R. Suarès, the Egyptian banker, he is responsible for three enormous enterprises, "The Daira Saniah," "The Assouan Dam," and "The National Bank," the last-

named giving birth shortly afterwards to "The Agricultural Bank."

The establishment of a National Bank had been a crying necessity for some time, and its success was assured. Its influence to-day in all which vitally concerns Egypt is enormous.

The affair of the "Assouan Dam" was another masterstroke. Sir William Garstin having completed all the plans for the huge reservoir, there arose the question of finding the £3,000,000 necessary for its construction. The Caisse de la Dette, composed of members representing France, England, Germany, Austria, Russia and Italy, who controlled at that time all the capital of Egypt, threw difficulties in the way, and demanded that the contract should be put up for tender. The Government objected for the following reasons: "To firms tendering at least two years' study of the question would be necessary: on receipt of their offers another six months would be required by us to study the plans; in that way three precious years will be lost, whilst we have in hand the offer of a firm whose reputation for honesty is world-wide, Messrs. Aird and Co., who are ready to carry out the plans of Sir William Garstin. They do not ask for a penny of the cost, but are willing to accept an annuity of £100,000. Why hesitate?" The question was decided. The contract was placed with Messrs. Aird, but as they required the money to carry out the work, they applied to Sir Ernest Cassel, who thereupon furnished the money required. And as the announcement that the scheme was to be carried out was noised abroad the value of land in the whole of Egypt rose by leaps and bounds. Messrs. Suarès and Cassel brought out at the same time a third affair, that of the "Daira," a land company, out of which they made over £3,000,000.

The "Daira Saniah" was one of the properties belonging to the Khedive Ismail, which this Sovereign was made to hand over to Egypt and his creditors. The working of the estate was difficult and costly, and was far from bringing in what had been hoped. One day it was announced that the Government had sold it for £6,250,000 to Messrs. Suarès and Cassel, with whom were associated a group of French capitalists, headed

by M. Cronier, a group who had just taken over the Sugar Works and Refineries.

These three huge affairs, brought out suddenly by the same men, created a considerable stir, especially when it was learned that the Government had in their possession a report of Crookshank Pasha, representing the English bondholders, which declared that the "Daira" was worth at the lowest computation, £10,000,000.

M. RAPHAEL SUARÈS

No one was in a position to know the value of the estate better than Crookshank Pasha, and it must be acknowledged that he had not deceived himself, since the "Daira," resold by Messrs. Suarès and Cassel, fetched over £13,000,000. The deferred shares issued at £1 are now quoted £108, ex £78 which were paid to the holders last October. As to the profit of over £6,000,000 made on the sale of the land, half of it was paid to the Government, the remaining half going to the Cassel group, who had agreed by the terms of their contract to remit to Egypt one-half of any profit accruing at the final liquidation.

In this way millions were made; but they are as nothing compared to the millions gained by those, rich or poor, who bought, some large, others small, tracts of land from the Cassel group. These sales being made, if desired, at so much down, and the balance in bills at a certain date, people bought and sold, rebought and resold, *without ever having entered into possession of the land, which, as a matter of fact, was only handed over this year.*

Boghos Nubar Pasha informed me that he had purchased

lands in the "Daira" for £60,000, and for which he has to-day been offered £300,000.

Scarcely had these three huge affairs which I have briefly described been granted to Messrs. Cassel and Suarès than the Financial Adviser, Sir E. Palmer, on whose advice the Egyptian Government had acted, retired, and was nominated manager of the National Bank. There was some ill-natured comment on this appointment, but I have been unable to find any confirmation of the suggestion that it was connected in some way with the Daira's transactions, though I took the pains to inquire about it even at the offices of the Caisse de la Dette, where "Financial Advisers" are not in great favour.

Dittrich

SIR E. PALMER

Human nature would not be what it is if this nomination had been allowed to pass unnoticed, and being misunderstood no hesitation was shown in certain quarters in launching all kinds of accusations against the Financial Advisers in general and Sir E. Palmer in particular. The reputation of the latter is so great that I should not have troubled to mention these insinuations had I not heard them repeated within the precincts of the Caisse de la Dette itself, that institution which has done such yeoman service for Egypt but whose *rôle* is now over. One morning I betook myself to their offices. On entering I felt as if I had suddenly penetrated into the abode of the dead. The long cold corridors, the empty rooms, the unoccupied offices, all gave an impression of sadness and gloom. The representatives of the six Great Powers who, under the title of Commissioners of the Debt, have for twenty years controlled and directed the finances of

Egypt, are men of remarkable intelligence and ability. Now even amongst those who have consistently voted against France and in favour of England the greatest discontent is manifest.

"Look how one thing leads to another," they said to me at the Caisse; "they have withdrawn from us the millions which we administered wisely and well for Egypt, under the pretext that they are required for the carrying out of certain great works, amongst others the raising of the Assouan Dam. Now that the money has been handed over, these projects have been abandoned or postponed till the Greek kalends. Where are those millions now? At the National Bank, which will allow Egypt 2½ per cent. interest on money which it can employ profitably at 8 per cent. to 10 per cent.! Is it any wonder that tongues will wag and insinuations be made?"

There are, of course, in this, as in most disputes, two sides; and the other side I had the opportunity of hearing when a few days later I received a visit from Harari Pasha, one of the greatest authorities on Egyptian finance, who ought to be well up in the question, seeing that at the Finance Ministry he was in charge of the department whose business it was to look after the "Daira Saniah," and who, resigning his post after many years of excellent service, now directs the Daira Estate in the interests of the Cassel group.

Having told him of all I had heard, I will give word for word his reply: "There is in what you have said a grain of truth, but much that is false; and it is this grain of truth which has given rise to so much talk. The Financial Advisers have never made use of their position for their personal profit, never! And Sir E. Palmer is the last man in the world to do so. Only he left the Government service to take up a brilliant position; hence the trouble. Palmer was poor, why should he refuse such a good berth? As to making him responsible for the sale of the "Daira," the thing is ridiculous, for, powerful as the Financial Adviser may be, he can do nothing without, on the one hand, the approval of the Council of Ministers, and, on the other, that of Lord Cromer. The idea that Lord Cromer would allow any suspicious deal whatever is so absolutely impossible that one does not stop even to consider it. The truth of the matter is, that the thing was done with the

complete approval of all the members of the Government, Egyptian and English. No one could foresee that the estate would increase in value to such an extent, and in so short a space of time. £6,250,000 was considered a very good price for the 'Daira,' and, besides, the buyer said, 'I relieve you of all the trouble, all the anxiety, all the expense which the estate has brought you. On my part I shall do the best I can for myself, and if at the finish of the business there is a profit, we shall share equally in it.' It must be admitted that the offer seemed a good one, and one cannot blame the Adviser who recommended it and had it approved by the Ministers."

David Gardiner
DOOR TO SEBÎL MONTAHAR

Some time after, I had occasion to discuss these matters with M. R. Suarès, the well-known banker and financier. "The thing won't hold water," he said, "and I can prove it. It was I, and not Cassel, whom I had only seen once in my life and with whom I had had no business relations—it was I, I repeat, who obtained first the concession for the founding of the National Bank and the option of purchasing the 'Daira' for £6,000,000. Our house Suarès Brothers, not wishing to supply all the capital necessary, I left for London with the intention of offering a share in the business to one of my friends On the boat, Mr. D., well known in Egypt, advised me to immediately see Cassel, who, he believed, was anxious to enter into business relations with

Egypt. I took his advice. When I offered 50 per cent. of the 'Daira' to Cassel he said: 'I know nothing about this class of business, what do you think it ought to yield?' I told him I looked for a profit of something over £1,000,000, when he said he would trust to me; and the affair was concluded. The concession for the Bank seemed to please him more, and he asked who we should place at the head. It was then that I proposed Palmer, whose name, so well known as Financial Adviser, was bound to carry weight. You will see, therefore, that there was absolutely no arrangement between Sir E. Cassel and Sir E. Palmer."

One thing is certain, and that is that the financiers and speculators are to-day in Egypt a formidable force to reckon with. Lord Cromer, who has a horror of everything in the nature of a gamble, and who sees clearly the danger which threatens his work, has, unfortunately rather late in the day, clipped their wings.

As long as he holds the reins he will apply the brake which will keep Egypt safely and surely from the mad rush which would lead to a crash such as the world has never yet seen—whilst he is there—yes, but when he is gone?

That is the question which many thoughtful men are asking to-day, and they naturally fear that through political and other influences a man of less experience may be given the place so brilliantly filled by Lord Cromer, when the day comes for him to exchange for a well-earned rest the field of battle and of progress on which he has covered himself with glory.

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PYRAMIDS AT SUNSET

CHAPTER V

FRANCE IN EGYPT

Serious faults and great errors—Story of the sale of the Suez Canal shares—The Anglo-French Treaty—French interests—Small faults and small errors—The schools—The sugar works—Commerce—The Caisse de la Dette—Antiquities—M. Maspéro—Work commenced by the French: Irrigation—Canals—Dams—English engineers invented nothing—They carried out the plans of French engineers—Cromer and France.

"It is from our officers, our engineers, our sailors, our agronomists, our jurists, that Egypt for many years has borrowed her instructors, her masters, her methods, and her laws. Moreover, our colonists, industrial and commercial, have settled in great numbers in the valley of the Nile. They consider themselves almost on French soil, and for them life in Egypt is no exile. Thus is explained this flow of capital which we have directed into the coffers of the Pashas, and this marvellous Suez Canal which seemed destined to be the work of French hands. Our position during three-quarters of a century has been superior to that of any other nation: an unheard of combination of circumstances has been necessary to lead to its decline, which, I dare to believe, is but a temporary one."—DE FREYCINET, *La question d'Egypte.*

ALAS, M. de Freycinet, this "unheard of combination of circumstances" was brought about by the errors and weakness of the statesmen who, at different times, controlled the destinies of France, and above all by those who, after having extolled the idea of armed intervention by France and England in Egypt, drew back, leaving the latter Power a free hand in *cette terre à moitié française.* I am quite ready to recognise

that on this occasion the responsibility rests less on the Government, which proposed loyally to act with England, than with the parliamentary majority who forbade it.

France, you say, still weakened by the awful struggle of 1870, alone in Europe, feared lest events in Egypt might lead to a general conflagration, and wished therefore to preserve intact the defences of the country. That, evidently, was M. Clemenceau's idea when he carried with him the parliamentary majority, holding up before them the terrible spectre of war, crying:

"Truly, it seems as if, somewhere, there were a hand preparing an awful cataclysm in Europe. Who will dare to take the responsibility of what is coming? Who will say, when the day comes for diplomacy to settle the Egyptian question, that it is better for France to take her place by the side of England against Europe, than to join with Europe, claiming her just share of influence over Egyptian affairs?"

The misfortune was, that once France had refused to follow England, Europe, in her turn, refused to follow France, and not a voice in the European Concert was joined to hers in protesting against the English occupation, unless from time to time, but feebly and without conviction, that of Russia.

Where, then, lies the good in recrimination? Besides, as M. de Freycinet recognised himself, the most violent reproaches levelled at England had no foundation; she had no desire to enter, *manu militari*, into Egypt, she did everything which lay in her power to avoid doing so, but, forced to do so, she sought to have France with her. I will add that the same "combination of unheard of circumstances which led to the decline of French influence" forced England to remain in Egypt.

Neither this French decline nor this English ascendancy is "temporary." The time of dreams is passed. It must now be recognised that English influence in Egypt is so deeply rooted that she has nothing to fear, and that, politically speaking, French influence has ceased to exist. I say politically, for the Egyptian, who formerly had two countries, "his own and Paris," will always have for France feelings of friendship and affection, such as he will never have for any

other people. In his character, his tastes, his ideas, and his inclinations, he approaches much nearer to the French than to the English. He can become a sincere and devoted friend to the former, *who treats him as an equal*; but never to the latter, who, on every occasion, asserts his superiority and treats him as an inferior. The Egyptian appreciates what England has done for his country, he is grateful, but coldly, and without enthusiasm. Lord Cromer is feared, respected, admired, but

Dittrich

GHEZIREH BRIDGE

not loved : he is the saviour and the judge in whom he has absolute confidence, but he is also the man who, whilst saving him, has left on his skin the marks of a strong hand.

The Egyptian owns to a gratitude without bounds, an immense admiration, a blind belief—but not to that affection which he will willingly extend to the first Frenchman he meets, who shakes him by the hand and treats him as a brother. If he studies French, it is from choice ; if he studies English, it is from necessity ; for, from top to bottom of the social scale, the latter is the language which he will find most useful. In the Ministries, where the Advisers are English, in the Posts, Telegraphs, Telephones, Railways, English is imperative ; in the

hotels and business houses it is the same, for it is the English and Americans who form the great majority of the tourists, the source of considerable wealth to Egypt. When acquainted with the two languages, he will be found making use of English in his office, French in his home, the first for business, the second for friendly and affectionate intercourse. He prefers the goods and the products of France, he loves French literature and art, for these he understands, these he can assimilate and appreciate, whilst even the masterpieces of English genius are for him too heavy and too cold.

David Gardiner
FLOWER-SELLER

But, in spite of all that, the Egyptian has no desire to see England replaced by France, and if, to-morrow, his feelings on this point were put to the vote, I have no doubt whatever that the *status quo* would be demanded by an immense majority.

The feelings of the better-class Egyptians with regard to France were very clearly explained to me one day by one of the most intelligent and up-to-date men in Egypt at the present moment. I refer to the Minister of Finance, Mazloum Pasha.

"Well," he said to me, "whom can France blame but herself? It is by her own faults that she has lost Egypt—and such faults! She accomplished the construction of the

Suez Canal after a homeric struggle with England, who would have none of it, but who by the mouth of her Prime Minister declared it to be a Utopian idea, a will o' the wisp. The work was done with the aid, moral and material, of the Khedive Ismail, a magnificent work which should have remained for ever her inheritance and ours, but at the time of the downfall of Ismail, she could not, in time, make up her mind to prevent England acquiring the shares which enabled her to have a voice in the affairs of the Canal and Egypt. Besides, it was to France that these shares were offered by the Khedive.* Why did they not take them ? Who was to blame ? Why in 1882 did she refuse to follow England after having agreed to an armed intervention ?

" You see the great errors committed in the past the French continue to make to-day on a smaller scale in those affairs in Egypt where their interests are affected. Take, for example, the sugar works and refineries, an enormous business and an excellent one, which had a marvellous future before it. They constituted part of the 'Daira.' When that was sold and a French group had acquired the works, they were offered, at a very low price, the lands necessary for the growing of the sugar cane, without

* A group of Paris bankers to whom the shares were offered decided to buy them, after considerable hesitation, on the condition that the *Government should lend to them a kind of moral support.* Whilst the Government, on its part, hesitated, or simply took its time, Mr. Oppenheim of London, who had a Paris correspondent and one in Cairo, had Lord Beaconsfield informed by Mr. Greenwood of what was going on, and of which the British representative in Cairo was still ignorant. Mr. Oppenheim declared to Lord Beaconsfield that the sum of £4,000,000 was necessary to purchase Ismail's shares, and that, by going into the market for the amount, the affair might get to the ears of the French bankers, who would thereupon immediately close. In his opinion it was necessary to act at once, and Rothschilds alone could give the four millions. Lord Beaconsfield did not hesitate. Putting on his hat he sought the Rothschilds, and said to them : " I need four millions on the spot for a certain affair. I have no security to offer. As soon as Parliament meets, I will present a bill for the sum necessary to repay you. If Parliament approves, good and well ; if not" . . . The Rothschilds agreed at once. They advanced the £4,000,000, and, that same day, the English agent in Cairo, to his great astonishment, received a telegram ordering him to announce to the Khedive that England would buy his shares.

which the works were useless. With a lack of foresight almost incredible, the Board refused the offer. What is the result? Up to now the supply of cane has been sufficient because, in the contract, the Government undertook to have under cultivation* on the lands leased by it enough cane to supply the works. But the Government has now sold these lands, and the peasant, finding it more profitable to cultivate cotton and onions, does not wish any longer to plant cane. What will the refineries do when they can obtain no more?"

Dittrich

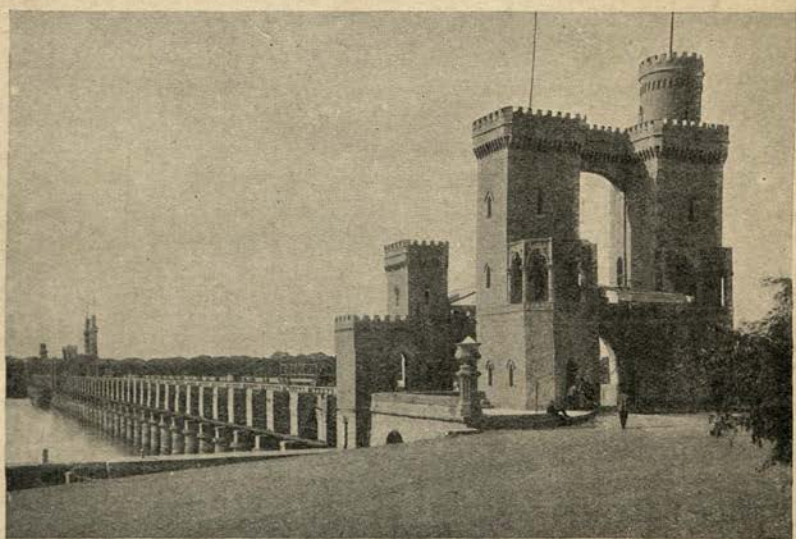
H.E. MAZLOUM PASHA

Mazloum Pasha was now started, and in the most perfect French he proceeded to discuss all the French affairs in which he was interested, for it is well-known that, at the bottom of his heart, he entertains a feeling of the warmest affection for France.

"Naturally," he continued, "when we see the admirable way in which England conducts her business, and compare it with the way in which France here conducts hers, we cannot but congratulate ourselves, in spite of our sympathies for her, that she does not direct and control ours. I will give you an example of the lack of tact of which we complain. You know that the French schools in Egypt under the direction of the Jesuits have rendered an immense service to our country. Up to the present they are the only really good schools which we have possessed. To them has been entrusted the education of the children of almost all the best Egyptian families. We owe them much, but they also owe us much, for without us they

* In leasing the land in Egypt, the farmer is often obliged to cultivate a certain quantity of a particular crop.

would not exist. Our tolerance has enabled them to establish themselves here. Would you believe it then that the Jesuits have, for us and our feelings, absolutely no consideration? We Mussulmans have two feast-days in the year on which we are accustomed to have a family gathering. Naturally, we like to have our children with us; but it is impossible, we have never been able to have it, *because these feast-days do not exist in the Christian Calendar.* Now, look at the Christian feast-



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NILE BARRAGE

days they cram down our throats! How many times in the year are our children at home because it happens to be the Feast of the Virgin, or Easter, or Christmas, or St. Joseph, or St. Nicholas, or Ascension, or the birthday of the Rector, or a visit from Monsieur the Bishop of some place or other? We do not complain. We keep our children on those days of lost study, for which, all the same, we have to pay, but surely we might be allowed to have them on the two occasions we wish!

"Then there is something still more ridiculous. Its well understood that our children, when they attend the French

schools, belong, and will continue to belong, to the Faith of Islam, and that no effort will be made to turn them from their religion. No effort is, in fact, made, but they are obliged to take part in religious services, and to learn the Catechism. Can you imagine anything more ludicrous than a Jesuit asking, 'Are you a Christian?' of a child which he knows perfectly to be a Mussulman, and who *must* reply, if he wishes to earn a good mark, 'Yes, I am a Christian, by the grace of God.'

"Frankly, what do you think of it? You may ask me, 'Why send your children there?' Simply because, in spite of this, they are the best schools we have, and at no others can our children obtain such a good education. It was so yesterday, but it is hardly so to-day, and it will no longer be to-morrow. In fact, the English, the Germans, above all the Americans, and even the Jews, have set to work, and the schools which they are opening, and of which many are excellent, are beginning to tell on the Jesuit colleges, for in these schools they have the good sense not to make little Mussulmans repeat by heart, 'Yes, I am a Christian, by the grace of God.' And that is how," concluded his Excellency, "the French, whom we love so much, muddle up their affairs great and small."

Faithful to my resolution to hear always both sides of a question, I betook myself one morning to the Jesuit College of the Holy Family, at Cairo, where I was cordially received by the Rector, the Rev. Father Cottet. The two hours' conversation which I had with this man, so well read, so frank, so liberal minded in his ideas, so absolutely sympathetic, will remain amongst the most pleasant recollections of my stay in Egypt. I recounted to him the criticisms which I had heard, without, however, giving the name of my informant. He listened with the greatest attention, then smiling frankly, he said:

"Your discretion availeth not. I know very well from whence that criticism comes. Mazloum Pasha is a man whom I love and admire. He is a Mussulman, up-to-date and liberal. To come to the point which interests you, I can tell you that the children of whom his Excellency spoke to you are not here. They are in a college situated in another town, and it is not for me to criticise what they do there. What I can say is this,

that here religious instruction is in no sense obligatory, nor is it general.

"Our consciences, as men and as priests, will not allow us to force children belonging to a different faith to assist at our religious services. On the contrary, it would be against the commands of the Church of Rome. You must observe that, leaving aside the question of religion, there would be an excellent reason for insisting in the French schools that the pupils attending them should be taught the salient points of the Christian religion, without which it would be impossible to understand the great French classics, such as Racine, Bossuet, Fénélon and La Fontaine. We Christians learn heathen mythology in order to understand the ancient literature. Put on these grounds the question ought not to trouble any Mussulman, and the proof that it does not do so lies in the fact that many of them attend voluntarily the religious classes. Our Church in Egypt is much more liberal than people believe.

Ritsert

FATHER COTTET

"We should like to see the ignorant and backward population of Upper Egypt, of which a large part possesses neither religion nor schools, raised from the state of brutishness in which it exists. Hundreds of villages are begging for teachers, not having the necessary £15 a year to pay for one. It is nothing to them to what religion he belongs, they ask only a little light in their darkness. This population, morally speaking, belongs to those who take to them the first elements of civilised instruction. We are so convinced of the necessity of

immediate effort being made that we are searching everywhere for Christian help, *even outside the Church of Rome.* We are attempting to raise the Coptic Church, and we have actually founded a small Coptic seminary, whence have gone forth the Bishop and his priests."

I then questioned Father Cottet as to what he thought of the decline of French influence in Egypt. "It is Fashoda," he said, "which has done us most harm. Twenty years of British occupation has not shaken French influence as much as this unfortunate event. Marchand abandoning his position at Fashoda, that was the symbol of France abandoning the position in Egypt which she had held for a century. After Fashoda, in the Government schools, the children gave up the study of our language and chose that of England; it was then understood that England was, once and for all, mistress of Egypt. But the popularity of the French schools has not diminished; on the contrary the number of pupils is increasing yearly.

"Far from having encountered any opposition on the part of the English, we recognise that Lord Cromer has invariably treated us with the greatest justice and consideration. We have nothing but praise for him. Times have indeed changed. Only a few years ago, a priest dared not show his face in the crowded quarters without being grossly insulted, whereas, to-day, wherever he may go, he is treated with respect. Order has taken the place of anarchy."

All those representing French interests in Egypt have spoken thus of Lord Cromer. At the offices of the Sugar Works and Refineries, the Administrator, M. de la Bouglise, said: "The policy of Cromer has always been just and liberal. He defends his position, but, at the same time, he is always ready to recognise the rights of others. The representative of England, all powerful here, has always been most considerate to us; we cannot say the same of every one. We have certain powerful enemies who spend their time in waging against us a violent campaign of slander and lies. Last year when the chiefs had left for their holidays they did not hesitate to spread the report that they had left for good, taking the cash of the Company with them."

It is certainly true that war is being made against the Sugar Company, and a person well up in the question enlightened me as to the reasons. They are :

(1) Not having bought, whilst they were still to be had at a low figure, the lands necessary for the growing of the cane.

(2) Having spent money lavishly and needlessly on the building of offices, stores, and houses for the employees, &c.

D. Gardiner

SUGAR-CANE MARKET

(3) Having alienated the peasants by treating them harshly. These, for example, complain bitterly that the order for cutting the cane is given too soon, so that, instead of having it weighed immediately, it is allowed to dry for several days, thus diminishing the weight and the amount due to the grower. As it is, cane bringing him in very little, he prefers to raise other crops.

(4) That the system in vogue of allowing the agents of the Company to make a personal profit upon purchases, is detestable, as there will always be found some ready to rob the peasant or the Company, or both, for his own benefit.

(5) Above all, the Society is accused of speculating in its products, and with its shareholders' moneys, in the European markets, and of running the risk of a formidable smash.

The above was written by me in the month of May last. Before leaving Cairo, I had mentioned the five indictments against the Company, which I have here enumerated, to M. de la Bouglise, who promised me a detailed and categorical answer. In spite of continual requests on my part for this reply, I was still without it when the suicide of M. Cronier, the death of M. de la Bouglise, and the crash of the Sugar Company came to confirm all that had been prophesied.

I should like, however, to warn my readers against two things to which these events seem to have given rise in certan quarters, the first a tendency to believe that the Sugar Works and Refineries of Egypt is a rotten concern, and the second, a belief that Egyptian investments in general are risky.

Nothing is more unjust. The Sugar Works were led on by a man of undoubted talent, but rash to the verge of madness, towards that abyss at the bottom of which he himself found his death. But that does not prove that the business itself is a bad one. Two of the best-known men in Egyptian financial circles spoke to me last spring as follows: "The situation is far from being a desperate one . . . it may become brilliant . . . to do so one thing only is required which up to now has been wanting: *a good Manager*."

With that, undoubtedly, the Sugar Works can still recover. At the time of writing this (November 1) I understand that Sir E. Cassel, M. Raphael Suarès, and other capitalists have promised assistance on condition that the shareholders and creditors remain calm, and do not force a liquidation.

To judge Egyptian investments by this unfortunate affair would be folly. There are in Egypt hundreds of concerns absolutely safe, and which are returning excellent profits; but of course, these are bound to suffer from the fact that for some time a number of companies have been floated whose shares, flooding the markets, are not worth the paper they are printed on. Nevertheless, I state that there is not another country where better investments can be made, or safer, but naturally one has to know how to choose.

There is no doubt that Lord Cromer's policy has always been to conciliate French interests, as far as is compatible with the future of those he represents. Desiring strongly an *entente* with France in Egypt, and understanding that to obtain

Dittrich

FRENCH DIPLOMATIC AGENCY

this compensation must be granted elsewhere, he has worked, perhaps harder than any other, towards a general understanding between the two peoples. The Anglo-French agreement was the first step towards the *entente cordiale*. In certain quarters it has been alleged that this agreement has been entirely to the advantage of England, and that France has sacrificed interests in Egypt which were real, to interests in Morocco which are imaginary, or, at least, almost impossible of realisation ; that England, whilst keeping to herself Egypt,

a country rich and peaceful, has handed to France Morocco, a country poor and restless. But, when the agreement was signed, no one supposed that the Emperor William would appear on the scene in the way he did. It is only natural that England should have retained the fruits of her twenty years' labour in Egypt; and, besides, it must be pointed out that, when England first entered Egypt, her position there was quite as difficult as that of France in Morocco. If France, once an understanding is reached with Germany, will follow in Morocco the policy which has so well succeeded with Lord Cromer in Egypt, it is quite probable that her success will be equally great. As to the real interests which France has sacrificed, I confess I cannot see them. Her commerce, the capital invested by her merchants and financiers, her schools and her subjects established in Egypt, enjoy all the liberties, all the protection, all the facilities possible, and continue to give every sign of abundant prosperity. The one thing which France has renounced is the right which she formerly possessed of having a voice in the conduct of Egyptian affairs, and to control, first with England alone, later with the co-operation of the other great Powers, the finances of the country. Since England had shown that it was impossible for her to leave Egypt, France had recourse to what has been called "the policy of pin-pricks," which consisted in opposing and thwarting all her schemes.

With their minds made up beforehand, the French and Russian representatives voted against most requests for money made by the Egyptian Government for the carrying out of the great projects of Cromer and his Advisers.

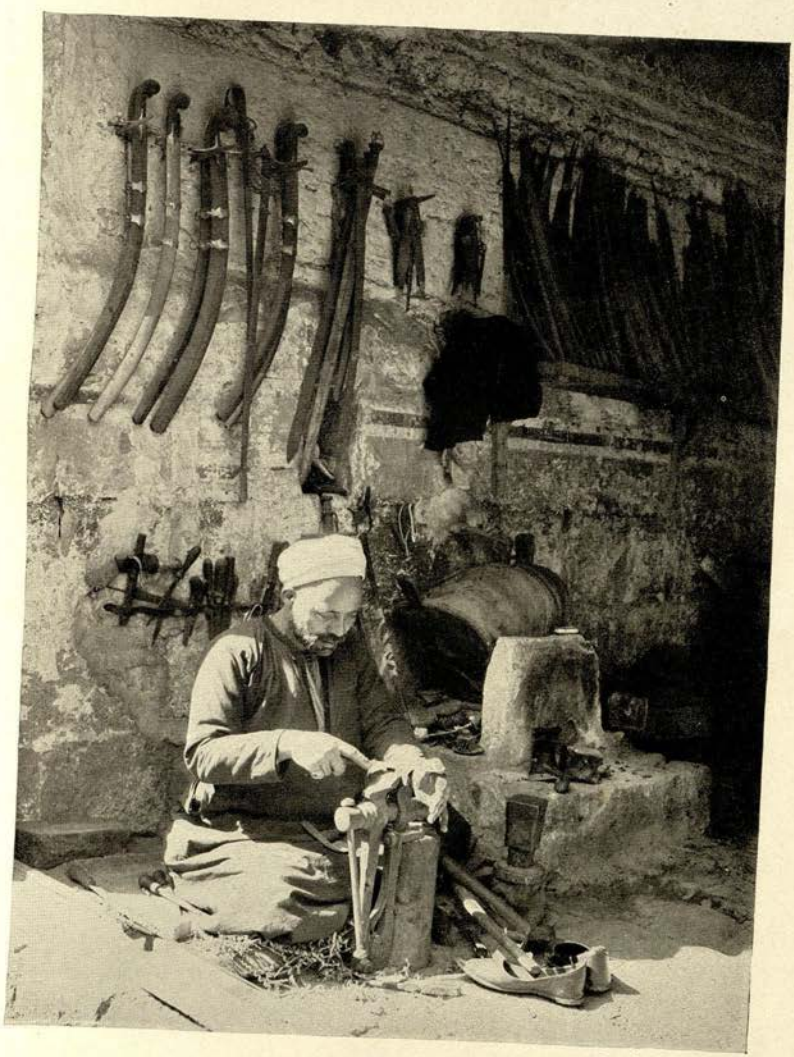
The Caisse de la Dette had certainly every reason for insisting on the greatest economy when the country trembled on the verge of ruin; but it is impossible to approve of its extreme niggardliness when its coffers were running over with gold, or the hoarding of millions when the entire future of Egypt depended on the intelligent use of the money. If the Caisse de la Dette had at the time given up the funds necessary for the construction of the Assouan Dam, Egypt would not have been to-day so firmly in the hands of English financiers. The event which, undoubtedly, decided England and Egypt

to withdraw the finances definitely from the control of the Caisse, took place at the time of the Sudan campaign.

To reconquer her possessions, given over to fire and bloodshed by the Dervishes, Egypt, who had been silently preparing for several years, required the sum of £500,000. This she demanded from the Caisse, and, after a violent discussion, the representatives of England, Germany, Italy and Austria decided to grant the money. The French and Russian representatives, on the other hand, voted against, appealing to the Tribunals, pleading that the unanimous consent of the Commissioners was required, and that a majority of four voices out of six was insufficient. They won their case, and Egypt had to surrender the money, *her money, with interest!* What happened then? Without hesitation, the English Parliament voted the amount required by Egypt and placed it at her disposal, thus consolidating her position, and giving her an excellent reason for placing herself side by side with Egypt in the Sudan, reconquering that province with Anglo-Egyptian troops and English money.

It is pertinent to ask whether, in refusing this money, and in attempting, in consequence, to delay the campaign in the Sudan, France and Russia had not in view the possibility that it might fall into the hands of Colonel Marchand and the strong Abyssinian force which should have joined hands with his, and enabled him to overcome the Dervish hosts? It must be admitted that the policy of thwarting England in refusing to Egypt the use of her own money was one unworthy of a great nation, and was, besides, much more prejudicial to Egypt than to England. No one understands better the foolishness of this policy than the present representative of France in Egypt, M. de la Boulinière, a man of sterling qualities and intelligence, and a keen and energetic diplomatist.

I have been able to divine in M. de la Boulinière two feelings, at once natural and just. The first, a great regret at the recollection of the privileged position, a position quite unique, which France occupied on the banks of the Nile twenty-five years ago, but lost now through many errors and the consequences following on them; the second, the danger of the policy of pin-pricks, from which no good could possibly come.



A SWORD-MAKER

David Gardiner

The real opinion of the representative of France was, I believe, from the start that "*France would either have to eject England forcibly from Egypt, or come to an understanding with her.*" It is certain that one or the other had to be done, and as France did not wish, even for Egypt, to let loose the awful dogs of war, it was necessary to come to an agreement.

"In view of the position obtained by England in the latter years," said M. de la Boulinière to me, "the agreement cannot be considered a bad one. England first of all asked considerably more. She desired, for example, the complete abolition of the Caisse de la Dette. We obtained its retention, not, certainly, to control the entire Egyptian finances, but to watch over the interests of the bondholders, and over the reserves which guarantee the payment of the interest. That was a great point gained, for, with the new policy of spending up to the last penny, and the possibility that England might, more and more, make use of Egyptian funds for the needs of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, the danger was always present of money running short, when the temptation would arise to dip into these reserves, at present locked up in the coffers of the Caisse. The new treaty places on the same footing the employees of both nationalities, and, as the Frenchmen to-day occupying posts in the Government have given the greatest satisfaction, nothing would seem to threaten their position.

"The 'antiquities,' that is to say all which concerns art in Egypt, the museums, the monuments, the temples, are also left to France. M. Maspéro, Director of this important Department, continues the work of Mariette and other French Egyptologists, who have earned renown in bringing to light the ancient Egyptian civilisation.

"In spite of the advantages which a knowledge of English procures for an Egyptian, to whom it is necessary in all the Government posts, and although in the purely Egyptian schools English is much in demand, in spite of this, I say, the French tongue continues to gain in popularity, thanks to the Congregational Schools, who struggle manfully and successfully. The Jesuit Colleges and the schools of the Brethren are over-

flowing, their success is enormous and continually increasing, at Alexandria as at Cairo.

"At Assiout, where the Austrian mission have important schools, they have been obliged to open a French department, so great and so pressing is the desire of their pupils to learn our language. Besides, the French School of Law has a great

Nadar

M. DE LA BOULINIÈRE

and well-earned success. It would be much easier, simpler, and cheaper for the Egyptians to study at the Khedivial School, for then they could pass their examinations at Cairo, whereas those who study in the French school must present their thesis in French, at their own cost. Notwithstanding this, our school is the more popular, and the Egyptian students, each year, pay in entrance fees £2400. To sum up, the study of

the French language in Egypt is far from being on the decline."

M. de la Boulinière also recognises the high qualities of Lord Cromer, his powers of concentration, his oneness of aim, his iron will, and the courtesy which he has always shown towards French interests even when opposing them.

Nadar

MADAME DE LA BOULINIÈRE

The representative of France also drew my attention to the fact that the most important works lately executed in Egypt had been suggested, often even begun, by Frenchmen. It must not be forgotten that the first dam across the Nile was made by French engineers near Cairo. This huge work, built of granite, has considerably increased the wealth of Lower Egypt, and will resist the ravages of time as the Pyramids have done.

I cannot better close this chapter than by quoting a passage in a letter which I have lately received from an eminent Frenchman, and one well acquainted with Egyptian affairs :

" . . . . your book on Egypt, where, in spite of everything, France has left her mark. Cromer, in a statement, very cleverly but very incompletely presented, of contemporary history in Egypt, wishes to show that, for anarchy and waste, England has substituted order and wealth. He would not have detracted a whit from the glory of England if he had stated that the work already accomplished by the French had served as a point of departure for all the important improvements which they have been able to accomplish."

RACECOURSE, CAIRO

CHAPTER VI

THE PLEASURES OF CAIRO, AND HER LAWS

Amusements of Cairo—The clubs—Sports—Mena House and the Pyramids—Helouan and the Desert—The Fish-market—Dances—Immorality—The lowest depths—Roulette—The Greeks—Guilty officials—The capitulations—The tribunals—Justice—Nubar's work—Situation difficult and often ridiculous.

THE amusements of Cairo, numerous and varied, cater for every taste. I have already spoken of the balls and *fêtes* given by the hotels, each one endeavouring to outdo the other in lavishness and ingenuity.

The climate on the one hand, with its warm and sunny days, and, on the other, the Anglo-American element keen on all manner of sports and very numerous, naturally lead to many out-of door meetings. At tea-time, the terraces of the Ghezireh Palace are invaded by a fashionable and cosmopolitan crowd, who amuse themselves listening to the music and still more to scandal. The Palace is situated on the Island of Ghezireh, a park in itself, of which one part only belongs to it. A huge space is set aside for the Khedivial Sporting Club, to which any visitor to Cairo may belong. There, there are excellent tennis-courts and croquet lawns, a golf course, polo ground, and lastly a racecourse. Matches of all sorts, besides races, are continually taking place, and attract a large crowd of players and pretty women. This is one of the most charming and popular spots in Cairo. At the entrance to

Ghezireh there is a curious roofless building of white stone, made up of a stage and boxes, which is used, I believe, in summer as a *café*-concert. An enterprising gentleman attempted a year or two ago to establish there a miniature Monte Carlo. He arrived one day with his luggage, composed exclusively of roulette boards and pretty women, the latter more charming than virtuous, and was convinced that, armed with such irresistible weapons, he would experience little difficulty in plucking the rich visitors and spoiling the Egyptians. It was an old game; but this time he had reckoned without his host, Lord Cromer. Little did it matter to him that the tourists should be done if they chose to be; but what he did care about was, that such a place of perdition should be established in Cairo, where all the Egyptian employees in the Government, and others besides, should gamble away their all too insufficient salaries.

The conflict was a short one; the roulette boards left for home, whilst the pretty sinners, stranded without a sou, endeavoured in vain to establish themselves in the fashionable hotels.

A Japanese passing through Cairo asked, I presume for curiosity, if there was such a thing as a "Washiwara" in the town. "My dear sir," said the English officer to whom the question had been put, "it would be quite unnecessary. We have here so many ladies quite *comme il en faut*."

In place of the official "Washiwara," there is, however, a whole quarter where vice reigns and flourishes—the Fish-market. It is here that in the *cafés* and other houses one can see the famous *danse du ventre*, whilst in the very lowest places, for a few francs, one can assist at scenes of the most revolting immorality.

The *danse* is far from being as interesting as people imagine. I do not know whether these extraordinary contortions were ever artistic, but if they were so they must have sadly fallen off. To-day, the majority of the women who twist and turn their bodies in public are ugly, old, repulsive, and rolling in fat. I have said the majority, for there are without doubt a few exceptions, at least there were some dozen years ago.

Finding myself in Cairo in January 1893, I made an arrange-

Lekegian

NATIVE MINSTRELS

ment, rather a risky one I believe, with a donkey boy to take me to one of the houses in the Fish-market. On arriving, I seated myself on a stool in a small chamber lighted by two smoky lamps. In the opposite corner, three ugly and dirty women played infamous music on impossible instruments. Disgusted and rather scared, I thought of beating a retreat when the dancers made their appearance, and I remained, astonished and charmed. I was young in those days, and perhaps apt to look at things through rose-coloured spectacles, especially where the fair sex was concerned. The three women were young and exquisitely made. One was black as ebony, a Nubian, I suppose; a second had a skin of marvellous whiteness, her I took to be a Circassian; whilst the third, like bronze, was an Egyptian. It was extraordinary. The three, who formed such a striking contrast, advanced, retired, returned, with heads and breasts now thrown back, now thrown forward to within a hand's-breadth of my face, their flesh quivering, the scent of their bodies in the air, their harsh cries joined to the wild music. I was completely overcome, and, for once, I believed that I had really assisted at a scene worth seeing.

"DANSE DU VENTRE"

As to the houses where one can witness indescribable orgies, I pass them by in silence, simply remarking that they would not exist a day were it not for the tourists who support them.

At Cairo there are two excellent clubs: the Turf and the Khedivial. The first, although numbering amongst its members several Europeans and Americans, is essentially English; and, considering the contempt which they profess for the Oriental races, it goes without saying that its doors are closed to all Egyptians. The Khedivial, on the other hand,

counts amongst its members, not only well-known foreigners, but numbers of Princes, Pashas, Egyptians and Turks. Play is high. When Lord Cromer consented to be a patron of the Turf Club it was, I am told, on one condition, and that was that there should be no gambling. The promise then made has no doubt been forgotten, for card-playing is now very much in vogue.

The Khedivial Theatre, much criticised but much frequented, has generally each winter a remarkably good programme. The season is divided into two parts, the one given up to Opera, the other to Comedy and Drama. The theatre, built in a few weeks when the Khedive Ismail wished to give a representation of "Aïda," has served its purpose, and now a loud cry is heard for a more modern house, the building of which, I believe, has been decided on. The interior, of white and gold, very pretty, is surrounded with two tiers of boxes, let by subscription to the *élite* of Cairo society; and it must be admitted that when the feminine rank and fashion of the town are gathered within its walls, dressed in the latest mode, and flashing with superb jewels, real or otherwise, the sight is a magnificent one.

Gardiner

STREET IN OLD CAIRO

The Arab quarter and the bazaars are always interesting for strangers, but ladies ought never to go there alone, under pain of being handled by fingers more expert than clean. The mere fact of being in the bazaars is for a foreigner a curious sensation. The narrow streets, bordered with shops open to the air, filled with gaudy goods; the indescribable smells, mixture of attar of roses, fried fish, scented tobacco and filth;

the strange swarming crowd of Orientals and Africans with skins tawny or black who invade the narrow pavements and the roadway, the drivers crying, shouting, cracking their whips to make a way through the midst of the indifferent mass, and with difficulty avoiding running them down, presents a striking and unforgettable picture of life, movement, colours and smells. The bazaars themselves are long alleys, passages where one has to watch one's feet, and on each side of which are the shops, where all the products of the East are exposed for sale, not to mention the German imitations, very cheap and very nasty. Here are carpets, curtains, carved wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl and ivory, old weapons; there again perfumes, jewels, precious stones; whilst a little further on the eye is attracted by sandals of brilliant red leather and graceful form, cloths, Arab robes, fez; and lastly the vendors of objects in exquisitely carved bronze and copper. Here also are vases, lamps, huge trays, coffee services, flower-pots of varied and charming designs. At certain places the carvers, seated at the doors of their shops, are seen busy at their work.

The scene is intensely interesting, though the bazaars at Cairo are much inferior to those of Constantinople. It is also necessary to remark that it is not in the bazaars that the finest work of the East is to be found, but only the cheapest, and not even that if the buyer has not all his wits about him, for in no place in the world is there to be found a bigger thief and cleverer rascal than the bazaar merchant. Those who wish to purchase anything first-class will find it outside the bazaars. Opposite the Savoy Hotel, for instance, there is the shop of Spartali and Co., where the most exquisite curtains and carpets can be had. For anything and everything in the way of furniture or knick-knacks, there is a house, unique of its kind, where many an hour can be passed, a house founded many years ago and belonging to M. Parvis, an Italian, a true artist.

To all those who are interested in Arabic art, so dainty and so exquisite, I should advise a visit to the "Musée Arabe," and the Mosques, where they will find many treasures in the way of sculptures in stone, wood, and metal, paintings, and wonderful gilt work. There is, for me, an immense charm in entering these houses of prayer and of hope, these temples where reigns,

calm and dignified, a religion which has inspired so many beautiful things, and which continues down the ages to be the moving influence with so many millions, whose souls, like our own, live in the hope of an everlasting bliss.

The domes and minarets of these Mosques, piercing with their graceful forms the intense blue of the sky, produce an exquisite effect when seen from the Citadel, on the hill which overlooks Cairo and its surroundings. This can be reached by carriage, and at the same time will give the visitor an opportunity of seeing the tomb of Mohamed Ali in the Alabaster Mosque, a building begun by the founder of the Khedivial dynasty himself. This Mosque is not remarkable for anything but its size and the marvellous way in which it is lit. It is a wondrous tomb, and worthy of the greatest sovereign of Egypt.

From this coign of vantage, the view of Cairo, white and grey, surrounded with gardens through which flows the Nile in all its majesty, is one never to be forgotten. It lies, an oasis of verdure and habitation, in the midst of the surrounding Desert, which stretches far away into the distance, until lost to view in the infinite. And if, dreaming, you have let your eyes wander towards where the sun is setting in a purple glow, of which the reflections light up the white walls of the city, and if you feel oppressed by the thought of all the centuries which are gone and their profound mystery, of the future which lies before, all unknown, then lower your gaze, and at your feet, on the huge place where religious processions setting out for Mecca are wont to start, you will see the youth of Egypt vigorously enjoying a game of football, and, waking from your dream, you will once more return to an Egypt *à l'anglaise*.

It goes without saying that in the country *par excellence* of excavations and discoveries archæological and historical, the Museum is intensely interesting. That of Cairo is a French work in every way, and one of which to be proud. It was founded some forty years ago by the famous French Egyptologist, M. Mariette, on whose death, in 1881, it was taken over by M. Maspéro, who after five years gave up the post to M. Grebaut, he in turn being succeeded by M. de Morgan. Once

more M. Maspéro has taken up the work, and never has there been a head of a department more esteemed and better loved.

The Museum occupies to-day an immense building, admirably situated, and only recently finished. There are to be found the treasures without number which the picks of the *savants* have unearthed from their hiding-places, where for centuries they have rested in peace. Here can be seen in the crowded halls all the history of Egyptian civilisation stretching back for thousands of years B.C. Her kings and queens, her princes and princesses, her soldiers and priests, warriors and conquests, her funerals and her feasts, all are there in the shape of mummies with golden masks, statues of stone, granite and bronze, of bas-reliefs wonderfully worked, of commemorative tablets, of animals, flowers, furnishing, and tools of every manner and kind.

I know nothing more affecting than these temples of the past, where, brought together, lies all which has constituted the life and, alas! the death of nations once great and powerful; all that has constituted the glory, the happiness, and the sorrow of those who, it may be thirty, it may be forty, or it may be fifty centuries ago, drank of the brimming cup of life under the same sunshine which warms our blood to-day, and who have now passed to the great unknown.

The statues, the vases, the altars, the sacrificial stones, the sarcophagi, the bas-reliefs, all these, I confess, left me cold; but I was drawn by an invincible power towards the cases where lay these little things which, *thousands of years ago*, had been daily touched by hands then supple and alive, to-day cold and withered, the hands of these silent forms whose deathly sleep in their narrow mummy cases has been to-day rudely disturbed, brutally interrupted by a curious folk, searching, seeking everywhere, unmindful of the dead. Here lie the little objects which have graced the toilette of some great dame, their exquisite jewels which prove how cunning was the worker in those far-off days. Rings and earrings, charms and crowns, diadems and pendants, lovely pieces of gold finely chiselled and incrusted with gems, ornaments, once upon a time, of princesses and lovely women, powerful and beloved. Speak of the *art nouveau*, and the horrors perpetrated to-day

in its name, and I will say to you, "Come hither and see what these old Egyptians could do, and with what a sure and exquisite taste they did their work."

And my emotion increased still more when my eyes, astonished, rested on those flowers dried and wonderfully preserved, those flowers which perchance, one sunny morning, *centuries ago*, springing from the rich earth, were plucked by a hand eager and quick with the joy of life, flowers, may be, to whom lovers' lips had whispered words of tenderness and hope.

Dittrich

THE PYRAMID ROAD

God! Can it be that all that, the essence of the life of a people, has come to recall to us across the centuries the vanity of earthly hopes? Amen! you will cry. So be it, we shall say no more. Let us leave the dead to M. Maspéro and his fellow *savants* and let us go forth into the sun, the air, and the fulness of life.

There is, to my mind, no more delicious road in the world than the large and lovely avenue which leads from Cairo to the Pyramids of Ghizeh, constructed at the entrance to the Desert. Along its length of seven miles are superb and lofty trees. At all hours of the day it is full of life: in the morning, ladies and gentlemen out for a canter; mules, donkeys and strings of camels, going and coming from the market. In the afternoon, fashionable Cairo, walking, driving or

motoring, and on the left the electric tramway with its note of modernity. This magnificent road was made in a few weeks at the time of the opening of the Suez Canal by the Khedive Ismail, in order that the Empress Eugénie might drive comfortably to the Pyramids. The Pyramids! what varied spectacles they have seen in the forty odd centuries before the exploits of Napoleon and since! Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Turks, French, English, all have come, one by one, to pitch their tents and unfurl their flags; whilst to-day, tourists of these and many other nations congregate in their thousands, fraternising and happy, joining in a pilgrimage of curiosity and pleasure.

Many are the reasons for which they come. First of all because they are the Pyramids, and it is necessary to "do" them; secondly, because it is an object for a very pleasant outing, and the Desert air, so pure and invigorating, acts as a tonic on all. Then again there are others who come to be photographed *with the Pyramids*, in order to prove to any doubting person at home that they have really been there, but, alas! how many of these have been deceived by the pseudo-photographer, whose outfit has consisted of an empty cigar-box, a black cloth, and a specious manner. After having posed with the neck stiff and the body uncomfortable, and having given his address and a sovereign, he is surprised to hear a few days later that he has quite spoilt the picture by having moved.

The precincts of the Pyramids are infested with an army of Bedouins, these devils of the Desert who, I believe, fear neither God nor man, and who live for two things only, and which they often obtain—plunder and women. Clothed in their long robes, wearing a turban, and armed with a stout stick, they surround the unfortunate tourists, making them the most tempting offers to show the Sphinx and the Pyramids, or to ascend the latter.*

The greatest prudence should be exercised, especially by ladies, at least by those who are not on the look-out, as it seems

* It is incomprehensible to me that the Government does not put a stop, once and for all, to the disgraceful behaviour of these Bedouins.

sometimes happens, for a disgusting experience. The ascent of the Great Pyramid is difficult and tiring. The rapidity with which the Bedouins accomplish it is truly extraordinary. Many tourists of both sexes resign themselves to the more sober joys of watching the performance from below. Two Bedouins are as a rule sufficient to hoist up a man, but three at least are required where a lady is concerned. Whilst one of these miscreants takes her by the hands, the other two push from behind, and it is then that they find an opportunity for playing their tricks.

At the foot of the Pyramids, on the borders of the Desert, is one of the finest hotels in Egypt, Mena House. At the tea-hour its terraces are crowded with a gay and brilliant throng. The large and comfortable *salons*, the delicious Moorish dining-room, the excellent food, the open-air swimming bath, the golf course, the tennis-courts, the croquet lawns, all go to make a stay at Mena House one of the most pleasant incidents of a trip to Egypt. The stables are excellent, and the charges reasonable. Carriages, hacks, donkeys, camels, and *sand-carts*, the last small vehicles, with wide flattened wheels, enabling them to pass over the sand without sinking, and by their means many a pleasant excursion can be made into the Desert. There are often at Mena House sporting meetings, which are very popular. The camel races are particularly amusing. These animals seem to understand perfectly what is going on, and are as keen on winning as their riders. Last winter, a camel, furious at being passed, seized in his teeth the leg of the jockey of his more speedy rival, and bit it with fury.

It is by moonlight that a stroll in the Desert is so charming when the Sphinx and the Pyramids rise mysteriously from out the Desert. It is the lovers' hour, and after a good dinner at Mena House, couples arm-in-arm seek the solitude and the shadow of the huge monsters of stone who, for thousands of years, have served as a shelter for their kind. What a thousand pities that they cannot speak! or perhaps, it is just as well.

There is another charming and popular spot, within half an hour's rail from Cairo, also in the Desert, but in an opposite direction. This is Helouan, celebrated for its sulphur waters.

The baths, as well as the Grand Hotel and the Hôtel des Bains, belong to the "Société des Hôtels Nungovich," and are perfect in every way. Here there is no dust, no noise, no dirt; the air is dry, bracing, and pure, and the calm ideal. There is another excellent hotel, the Tewfik Palace, besides numerous pensions.

Helouan lies at the foot of the mountains, on one of which a sanatorium, El Ayat, has recently been opened. In this wonderful situation, invalids and convalescents can find every comfort and convenience. There are, of course, the ubiquitous golf links, also a racecourse, which, now and then, attracts the fashionable crowd from Cairo.

So, briefly, I have described the principal amusements of Cairo. It only remains to say a word or two on those infamous gambling-hells which are one of the most abominable plagues of the town.

Places of debauchery, ruin, and perdition, all the efforts of the Government have not yet succeeded in stamping them out, simply because the Egyptian Government in the year of grace 1905 is not master in its own house. Ridiculous as it may seem, Egypt still remains a Turkish province, whilst the Ottoman Empire and its dependencies are still bound to the Foreign Powers by the Capitulations.

In a word, and for those who are ignorant of them, the Capitulations are clauses in certain treaties, entered into between Turkey and the Christian Powers, defining their rights and privileges in Ottoman territory. According to these Capitulations, foreigners living in Egypt do not come under Egyptian jurisdiction; they cannot be arrested without the consent of their Consul, whilst the police may not enter any house or building belonging to a foreigner unless a representative of the Consul be present. Egyptian police, standing at the door of such a house, and hearing the owner being murdered inside, would have no right to enter to his assistance.

One can easily understand to what abuses such a state of affairs can lead. I have, in a former chapter, had a good word to say of the Greek colony in Alexandria. Then I was speaking of the upper classes. There is another class, that of the merchants, of whom good also can be said. Admirable men of

business, pioneers of civilisation, they have helped very considerably in the development both of Egypt and the Sudan. There is, unfortunately, a third class of Greeks, thieves, smugglers, fancy men, of the worst description, who are masters of the lowest depths of Cairo. For reasons best known to themselves, the representatives of Greece have given only a very lukewarm help to the Government to put an end to this shameful state of affairs. Besides, this Greek Brotherhood of vice and crime seem to have spies even within the walls of their Consulates; for, in a mysterious and inexplicable fashion, they continually get wind of a police raid, officially accompanied, long before it takes place. It is really to be desired, for the good of Egypt herself, and of the respectable foreign element residing there, that the Powers should renounce their rights in this matter of the Capitulations, and leave to the English and the Egyptians the framing of a system of justice less complicated.

D. Gardiner

DANCING GIRL

One can easily imagine the state of things which existed before that great statesman, Nubar Pasha, established the Mixed Tribunals in 1875. Until that date there were in Egypt

seventeeen different Consular jurisdictions, before whom it was impossible to obtain justice, when, as often happened, a native or two Europeans of different nationalities were opposed. The native had, in some instances, to appear before two or three different Courts, according to the nationalities of the various defendants. The claims of foreigners against the Government increased; and, in the absence of any Court where such could be adjusted, they were taken in hand by the Consuls, and, thanks to the feebleness of the Government, led to the disbursement of many and heavy indemnities.

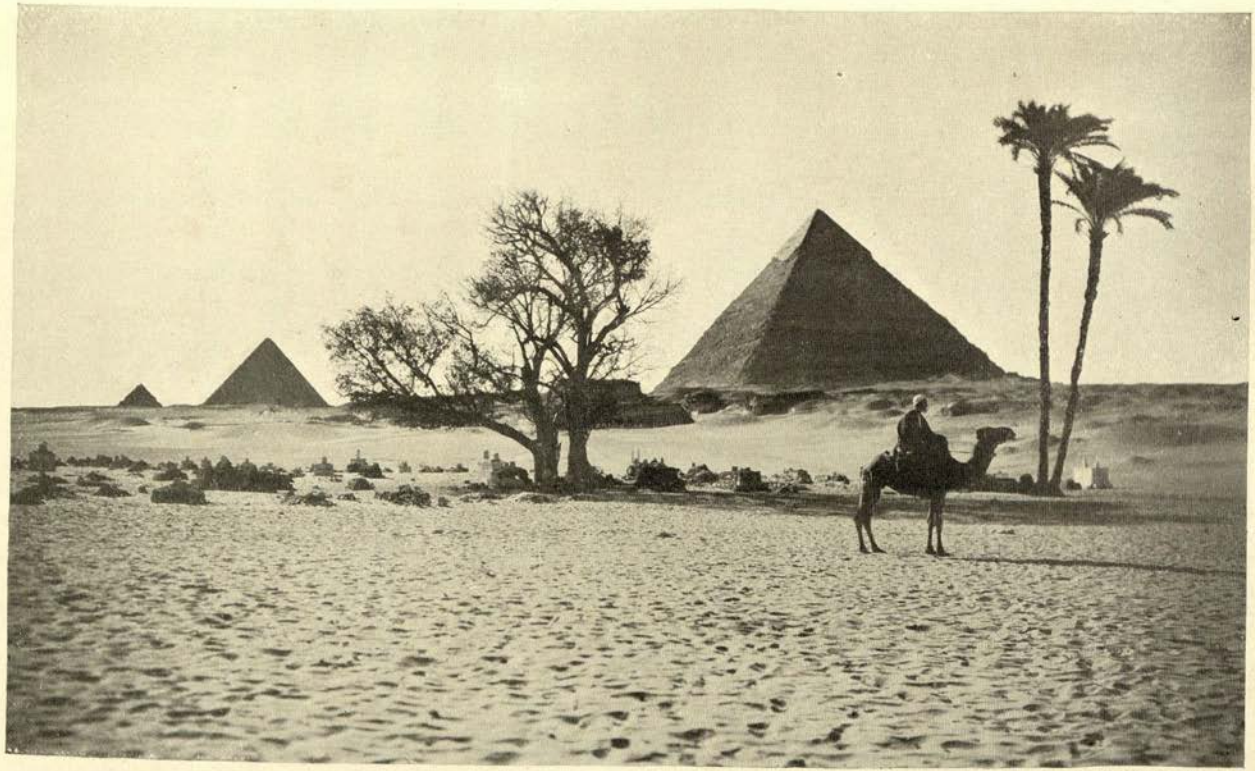
From the judicial point of view absolute confusion reigned—a state of things which, at last, could no longer be tolerated, and which had arisen less from the Capitulations themselves than from the errors which had gradually been allowed to enter into the interpretation of the texts, and which had altered their spirit. To put an end to this Nubar saw but one remedy,—the establishment of Courts in which European and native judges should sit together, and to induce the Powers to accept on behalf of their subjects Courts thus composed, giving every possible guarantee of impartiality. He did not try to disguise the difficulty of obtaining the consent of the Powers to a reform which would tend to lessen the importance of their Consulates, and from the first he warned the Khedive that, in order to bring it about that all Europeans should submit to these Courts, it would be necessary to inspire confidence and give every guarantee, to do which it would be necessary that the Khedive should set the example, and that his Government and he himself should submit themselves to the same Tribunals. This was, it is true, a lessening of his absolute power, but no one could object that the rights of the European population were not protected by these tribunals as against the Government.

The Khedive was the first to suffer from the existing state of affairs, both as the reigning power and as a private individual and owner of about one-fifth of all the cultivated land in Egypt; it was therefore to his own interests to see these Courts established, and he did not hesitate to give his approval. The negotiations with the Powers commenced in 1867. In London, the scheme was warmly welcomed, as also in Berlin. In Paris, the Emperor was personally all in its favour: "The

idea is great in its simplicity," he said to Nubar, who had come to him to explain matters; then he added textually: "But it is a moral revolution which you are introducing into Egypt, and one which will exercise a great influence on affairs in the East." The audience closed with the promise of the Emperor to recommend the scheme to his Government. Unfortunately, his Ministers were not of the same opinion, and the reform encountered in M. de Moustier, Minister for Foreign Affairs, a strenuous opposition. This opposition on the part of France was continued for eight long years, in the course of which the negotiations suffered many interruptions, but were taken up afresh on each occasion, thanks to the energetic perseverance of Nubar. But France was not alone in her opposition to the reform: the Khedive himself, who had welcomed the scheme enthusiastically, a scheme by which he had seen a means of getting rid of the continual interference of the Consuls, and of establishing an independent Government in Egypt, was not slow, influenced by interested parties, to see a danger for himself in the weakening of his absolute power, of which Nubar had from the beginning advised him.

So, profiting by the difficulties with which the project was being met in Europe, he stopped more than once the course of the negotiations. Thence sprang these divergences of opinion with Nubar, who could not reconcile himself to the abandonment of a scheme which in his eyes was inextricably bound up with Egypt and her future welfare. These differences in time assumed a character so bitter that Nubar, who from the beginning of the negotiations lived almost constantly in Europe, was several times completely ignored, in disgrace with the Khedive. Without allowing himself to be discouraged, he did not cease to persevere in order to win over Ismail to his ideas and to obtain his consent to the renewal of the negotiations with the Powers. At last his efforts were crowned with success, and the reform took place in 1875.

But Nubar had made many bitter enemies amongst those who had everything to lose by the establishment of justice, and who did not hesitate to accuse him of ingratitude, accusations as unmerited as they were unjust. These enemies relied above all on the influence exercised by Nubar on the abandon-



David Gardiner

PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH

ment of the properties of Ismail to the State. But this abandonment was claimed in 1878 by the Commission of Inquest, and it was because Nubar saw no other means of escaping from a catastrophe that he placed it in his programme as one of the conditions of his agreeing to form a Ministry, when, on the eve of bankruptcy, the Khedive, as a last hope, appealing to his patriotism, recalled him from Paris, where he was living in disgrace. Egypt was at the end of her resources, the Government was being worried by its creditors, whilst the Commission of Inquest insisted on the giving up of the Khedivial lands, in order to conclude the loan necessary for the payment of the most pressing demands, and thus avoid bankruptcy. This abandonment alone could save the country and the Khedive himself, and Nubar had the courage, which no other Egyptian then possessed, of telling Ismail so, and advising his acceptance, adding that he himself could not otherwise undertake the responsibility of forming a Ministry. The Khedive understood, and after some days' hesitation, natural enough in the circumstances, he handed over his properties to the State. And it is certain that if after this statesmanlike and patriotic act, thanks to which Egypt escaped the threatened catastrophe, Ismail had kept his promises and had governed loyally with the Ministry in which, under the presidency of Nubar, Sir Rivers Wilson and M. de Blignières took part, he would have remained on the throne to the day of his death, and neither the revolt of Arabi nor the subsequent events would have taken place. After the cession of the land and the raising of the loan, a wise administration, inspiring confidence, would have been

NUBAR

sufficient to re-establish the finances in a few years, and to save the country from the crisis through which it was passing. Events have amply proved the soundness of these precautions, and the excellence of the remedy in which Nubar had insisted as the price of his co-operation. It was on account of ignoring these and refusing to submit himself to the carrying out of this programme that Ismail was obliged to abandon his power. After having been absolute Lord and Master of Egypt, he could not bring himself to accept the much more modest *rôle* of an almost constitutional Sovereign created by the new *régime*. Therein lay his error and the cause of his fall.

Can one in good faith base an accusation of ingratitude on a measure which Nubar advised the Khedive to accept in such critical circumstances as being the only one by which he and the country could be saved? If Ismail had reflected, he would not have been long in realising the truth, and I can quote this phrase, uttered by him to several Egyptians whom he had invited to meet him at Naples, whence he had retired after his deposition: "My error has lain in not having listened to Nubar, if I had followed his advice I should still be Khedive of Egypt and the Sudan."

The enemies of Nubar, undoubtedly the greatest statesman Egypt has had, have spread many of the most ridiculous rumours with regard to him. They have even pretended, and it is still repeated in Cairo, that he had become a naturalised Frenchman, but that after the war of 1870 he had become a German! Needless to say that this stupid accusation was absolutely unfounded, and that Nubar lived and died an Ottoman subject. He has also been bitterly reproached for having favoured England in Egypt, and opposed France. I do not believe that Nubar ever favoured the policy of either one country or the other, unless, indeed, by so doing, he could obtain an immediate benefit for Egypt. Egyptian first, and loving his country passionately, having dedicated all his powers to her service, it was natural that he should incline to those whose assistance he found useful to Egypt. By training, education, and tastes, he was certainly more French than English; he had been brought up at the College of Sorrèze in France, where he had contracted many firm friendships;

and it was in France, at Paris, that he sought rest on each occasion when politics had left to him some leisure moments.

Why not frankly recognise that the policy of different Governments which have succeeded one another in France have been unlucky for Egypt ?

To conclude this subject, it has, I think, been clearly proved that Nubar has rendered to Egypt very great and very real services, and that the most important of these has been the establishment of the Mixed Tribunals.

Al Vista

TOMBS OF THE KALIFS

CHAPTER VII

ISMAIL AND HIS REIGN

Ismail and his reign—Dreams of empire—Follies of a Sovereign—*Fêtes* at the opening of the Suez Canal—Rivers of gold—The Empress Eugénie—Anecdotes—Unpublished history of the Abyssinian War—Ruin—Mysterious death of the Finance Minister—European intervention—Exile—Sad death of a man who, in spite of his faults, was a great Sovereign, and to whom Egypt owes much—Khedive Tewfik—His life and death as told by his doctor—The famous accusation of poisoning.

"My country is no longer in Africa, we now form part of Europe."

THUS did the Khedive Ismail, grandfather of the present ruler, one day express himself. He might have added: "By my folly I have thrown my country into the arms of Europe; she holds it, and will never release her hold."

After the formidable effort which Mohamed Ali had made on behalf of Egypt to cast off the yoke of Turkey, and to play the part of a great Power, the latter, under the reign of the Sultans Abbas and Said, had fallen into a profound lethargy. She would thus, no doubt, have continued, not to live but rather to vegetate, had not that madman of great ideas, that ill-balanced genius, that Sovereign, magnificent and unfortunate, Ismail Pasha, roused her from her torpor, and drawn on her and on himself the attention of the world. At the same time

for his happiness and for his misfortune, destiny decreed that the Suez Canal, the concession for which had been granted by his predecessor, Said, to M. de Lesseps, should be carried out during his reign.

This magnificent achievement, the glory of France and of M. de Lesseps, who, with undaunted energy, had brought it to completion in spite of the furious opposition of England, this work, I say, marked the crowning point of Khedive Ismail's reign. He wished that the entire universe should be a witness to the glory which the genius of France had shed on his country, and he brought together, from every clime, thousands of important personages, to witness the opening of the Canal, and to take part in the fantastic *fêtes* which he had organised.

born 1830
KHEDIVE ISMAIL
deposed 1879 (died

One had never before seen, nor, probably, will one ever see again, anything to equal these. The four thousand guests of the Khedive, amongst whom were the Empress Eugénie, the Emperor of Austria, and the Crown Prince of Prussia, took part at Cairo and Ismailiah, in uninterrupted *fêtes*, banquets, balls, operas, fireworks, gala performances, on the most lavish and reckless scale. The guests had to spend nothing, railways, steamers, hotels, carriages, even washing was paid for them with incredible prodigality. No control was exercised on the expenditure, and, for weeks, champagne flowed in palaces and hotels. The latter were paid when they wished, and as they thought proper, at the Ministry of Finance, where no one questioned their bills.

The three outstanding figures at these *fêtes*, of which the

echoes reached to every corner of the earth, were Ismail, the Empress Eugénie, and de Lesseps. Clothed in a cloud of glory, the triumph was theirs, and who shall say how many mortals there were who looked with envy on them? *Sic transit gloria!* How short a space of time was necessary to overwhelm and destroy all their lofty hopes and gorgeous dreams! Who would have foretold that Ismail, deposed and exiled, would have died heart-broken, far from his native land; that de Lesseps, broken down by years, and even more by mental suffering, would have expired, stricken with grief at the sight of his name linked to a work which had failed and sown ruin broadcast; or that that proud and superb Empress, having lost throne, husband, and child, alone surviving would still be wandering across the world in mourning and sorrow?

At this time the influence of France in Egypt preponderated. The sad events of 1870 had not changed the situation, and two years later we find Ismail still surrounded with men whose sympathies were altogether French, and who exercised on him much more influence than his Ministers. Amongst these intimate advisers of the Khedive must be mentioned: Barot Bey, his secretary, whose lovely wife had great influence with Ismail; Dr. Burguières Bey, his doctor; Gaston de St. Maurice, Master of the Horse, come to Cairo on the recommendation of General Fleury, and who had fitted up magnificent stables, copied from those of Napoleon III.; Count della Sala, his equerry, who had served as a captain under Maximilian in the Mexican War, a man exceedingly popular, especially with ladies. The Count was the first European to have a *liaison* with a Turkish lady of rank, of very high rank in fact.

To these three men, forming the immediate *entourage* of the Khedive, must be added the name of Count Koszielski, a Polish gentleman, who, after having served in the Prussian army, had installed himself in Paris. A man of the world, of charming manners, living the life of a *grand seigneur*, and with great influence, he obtained the post of *chef d'escadron* of the Imperial Horse Guards. At the same time he conquered the heart of the Princess Mathilde, wife of Prince Napoleon (Plonplon), and became her lover.

Following on events too numerous to be detailed here,

he gave up his commission in the Imperial Guards and arrived in Constantinople, at a time when the Poles, like the Hungarians, all enemies of Russia, were received with open arms. At the time of the Crimean War he was a Colonel in the Turkish army, when, on his becoming a General, he took the name of Seffer Pasha.

Prince Napoleon having been given command of an army corps, Turkey *with perfect tact* appointed the ex-lover as *aide-de-camp* to the husband, and Prince and General lived together in perfect harmony, as far as possible from cannon balls and bullets. At the conclusion of the war, Seffer Pasha, invalided, was obliged to relinquish his command, and, the doctors advising a warm climate for the winter, the Sultan recommended Cairo, asking him at the same time to keep an eye on the Khedive, whose fancies towards independence were causing him some anxiety. But Ismail had his own spies at Constantinople, and, knowing the object of Seffer Pasha's visit, found means to gain him over by the present of a house, grounds, and money.

Seffer, French by taste and inclination, joined the clique of St. Maurice, Burguières and Barot, forming round Ismail a barrier of French influence which seemed likely to resist every assault. The first breach occurred when Ismail, driven by the immediate necessity for money, sold his shares in the Suez Canal. The £4,000,000 paid him by England opened the door to English influence.

The *liaison* of the Khedive with Mdme. X. was, I believe, of short duration. With all his love of *fêtes*, pleasures, and *recherché* suppers (it was at one of these that he had brought to him on a huge silver tray a young and celebrated horsewoman) he seldom sought the company of foreign ladies. From Constantinople he brought slaves of every type of beauty, and, accustomed to do everything on a big scale, his harem *was composed of four legitimate wives, with the title of Princess, and* 250 *concubines.*

The fourth wife of Ismail was, they say, a common slave, fat and ugly, who one evening when Ismail had supped not wisely but too well, having brought his bed to lay on the floor in Turkish fashion, found favour in his sight. Later, it is

certain, he had reason to regret his folly; but the law of Islam is strict in these matters, and the slave, now about to become a mother, was elevated to the rank of Princess.

The fashion with regard to these things was a curious one. When one of the wives of the Khedive became *enceinte*, she was sent to the Palace of Kasr-el-Nil, known to the wits as the "Nursery." After the birth of the child took place, Ismail gave to the mother a well-furnished Palace supplied with eunuchs and all the attendants due to her rank. From time to time he came to pay a visit, bringing with him a sack of gold, which was placed in a press, and out of which, without any control, hands full of money were taken for the needs of the house. And the number of these houses was many.

But the dream of Ismail was the creation of an African Empire, great and powerful, which, freed from the yoke of Turkey, would stretch from the Mediterranean to the Equator. One knows how the Egyptian soldiers conquered the Sudan and the equatorial provinces. The power of Ismail, at this time, stretched as far as the Great Lakes, and his dream would perhaps have taken a definite form had it not been for an unfortunate event, which marked in a way the commencement of the setting of his star. I refer to the war against Abyssinia, of which the particulars are, to this day, wrapped in mystery.

One knows that a strong Egyptian army sent into Abyssinia never returned. A few officers only, for the most part foreigners, having carved a way at the point of their swords through the masses of the enemy, regained Egypt. One of these was General Thurneyssen Pasha, a distinguished officer, a well-known horseman, and celebrated duellist. Thurneyssen, who is to-day equerry to his Highness the Khedive, first saw fighting in Mexico under his leader and compatriot, Maximilian of Austria. After that heroic but unfortunate war he entered the service of the Khedive Ismail, whom he served with the greatest devotion, a devotion which he has continued to display under Tewfik and Abbas Hilmi.

It was from his lips that I heard the details of the Abyssinan campaign, which I can only briefly recount: Towards the end of 1874, Munzinger Pasha, a Swiss in the service of Ismail,

was Governor-General of the Egyptian Provinces of the Red Sea. One day he took by surprise, with only two battalions, the Abyssinian province of Boghas, situated to the north-west of Massowah. Munzinger pretended that Egypt had rights over this province, from whence the Abyssinians were in the habit of making raids into Egyptian territory. The truth of the matter is, that, having married an Abyssinian from this part, a Christian like most of her compatriots, and desiring to please her, he wished to place the province of Boghas under Egyptian rule, in order that he might live there with his wife during the hot season, this province lying high above sea-level and possessing a cool and bracing climate.

Dittrich

GENERAL THURNEYSSEN PASHA

On news of this attack reaching the ears of King John, he was seized with fury, and sent out several armed bands, who, entering Egyptian territory, massacred a number of the inhabitants. Irritated by these doings, and egged on by Munzinger Pasha, supported by Nubar, the Khedive Ismail determined to despatch a military expedition to Abyssinia. The object, presumably, was the punishment of the Abyssinians; but, in reality, Ismail, then at the height of his power, thought to conquer the country, which, joined to the equatorial provinces, already occupied in his name by Sir Samuel Baker, would have formed with Egypt and the Sudan the vast Empire of his dreams.

The courtiers and flatterers surrounding him, assuring him that one Egyptian regiment was worth 30,000 Abyssinians, and Munzinger boasting of his ability to conquer Abyssinia with two battalions, the Khedive sent a force ridiculously

feeble. It was composed of 4000 men, commanded by a Dane, Colonel Armdrupp, a distinguished artilleryman, but one whose knowledge was theoretical rather than practical, as he had never before seen active service. He was accompanied by Arakel Bey, a nephew of Nubar, who had just been appointed Governor of Massowah. This small force, entering Abyssinia, leaving, here and there, small posts, and reduced by the end of October to 3000 men, was suddenly attacked by King John in person, at the head of 30,000 men. The Egyptians were wiped out to a man, Armdrupp and Arakel Bey perishing whilst bravely defending themselves. The Abyssinians gave no quarter, whilst the wounded were finished by thrusts of a lance. Almost all the corpses were mutilated.

When the news of this disaster arrived in Cairo, Ismail announced his intention of taking a terrible revenge, and decided to immediately despatch a powerful force. Organised with extraordinary rapidity, this consisted of over 15,000 men, under the command of Ratib Pasha, a Circassian, Sirdar of the Egyptian army. Thurneyssen, then a Major, was his *aide-de camp*, and there were in addition eleven American officers, one Swiss, one Austrian, one Italian and one Belgian. The Chief of Staff, and second in command, was General Loring, an American, and under him was Colonel Dye, also from the States. The artillery comprised thirty-four cannon and twelve *fusées*. On January 24, 1876, the Egyptian army left Massowah, accompanied by an enormous baggage train, and entered into the unknown and mysterious country, of which nought was to be seen but a mass of mountains, seeming in the clear air to be surrounded with bluish clouds. On March 7 they encountered the enemy, under King John, and victory seemed assured when unfortunately one of the Egyptian battalions was seized with panic. Sword in hand Thurneyssen and the other officers stopped the fugitives, and were about to re-form when the cavalry, taken in turn by a mad panic, fled pell-mell through the infantry. The rout was complete, and seven entire battalions were massacred by the enemy. Thanks to the precaution which had been taken to construct a fort some distance in the rear, several battalions and most of the foreign officers managed to save themselves. There they made a stubborn

defence against the 100,000 of the troops of King John, who, in the end, gave up his prisoners and allowed the Egyptian force to retire. So ended this unfortunate campaign, which cost Egypt 10,000 men, and an immense sum in money.

Ismail's financial condition became at this time more and more critical. Egypt, sucked dry by the Khedive and his agents, had given up all her resources and all her savings, everything indeed which the unfortunate people could sacrifice. Unable to meet his creditors, almost entirely Europeans, to whom he now owed some £80,000,000, and who were noisily insisting on the protection of their various Governments, Ismail was obliged to open the door to European intervention as represented by England and France.

I have no intention of repeating here the long story of his difficulties or the efforts of the two Great Powers to restore order out of chaos. I will rest content with recalling an event which at the time created a great sensation, and which is, to this day, much discussed and misrepresented, and in which a Minister, still living, is made to play a part which was never his.

I refer to the disappearance and mysterious death of the Minister of Finance, the Moufetish Ismail Pasha Sadik. This man, the creature, *par excellence*, of Ismail, had been the instrument, clever but cruel, by which Egypt had been bled white. He alone knew by what awful tortures the millions had been amassed, and how they had been squandered, not only the millions of which Ismail had had the use, but those also which he and his friends had divided amongst themselves.

When England and France had appointed their Commissioners to inquire into the state of the finances of Egypt, Ismail understood that his Minister would be amongst the first to undergo examination, and that there was every probability that he, to use a vulgar term, would give the show away. The only possible solution was to have him removed. There are not lacking those who affirm that he was killed in a mysterious fashion by order of Ismail. After conversations which I have had with persons closely connected with this tragedy, I am convinced that the intention of the Khedive was not to have his Minister killed, but only kept out of the way. Ismail has

committed faults enough without accusing him of being an assassin, and at the same time blackening the reputations of those who were mixed up in the affair.

The following was told me by a person who was present when the Moufetish was arrested: Under some pretext or other, Ismail called his Minister, and after having chatted with him for a short time, he invited him to accompany him to the Ghezireh Palace, occupied by Prince Hassan. In the best of humours the Khedive laughingly said: "I must go and see my daughter-in-law," whilst, in the carriage, he cracked jokes and seemed to be particularly happy.

Arrived at the Palace, he entered the apartments of the Princess, telling the Moufetish to await him, for coffee, on board a boat, moored in the river opposite the garden. It is at this point that the versions of the story differ. It is asserted that the officer on guard was Moustapha Fehmy, to-day Prime Minister, and that he had received orders to arrest the Moufetish and, if necessary by force, to take from him his seal of office. A terrible scene, so says this story, was enacted between the two men, in the course of which, coming to blows, Moustapha Fehmy was bitten severely on the hand. Certain persons in high places in Cairo have assured me that the mark of the wound is still visible.

According to my informant, who was actually present, this did not occur. In the first place, Moustapha Fehmy was no longer then an officer. He had quitted the army on his appointment as Grand Master of Ceremonies, becoming later Director of the Daira Cassa. He could not, therefore, have commanded the guard which arrested the Moufetish. The truth is that when the latter arrived on board the boat, of which the officers, devoted to the service of the Khedive, had received orders not to let him escape, Moustapha Fehmy, by order of the Khedive, came to him to announce that he was a prisoner, and to demand his seal of office. The latter refused, and, mad with rage against the Khedive, the world in general, and the messenger in particular, he shouted, "You serve an assassin! May he be damned! Your turn will come . . . to-day it is I, to-morrow it will be you. Curse you, and if harm comes to me, may my blood be on your head!"

Dittrich

THE MOSQUE OF MOHAMED ALI

To all those who know the Prime Minister, and who know him not only incapable of any unlawful violence, but to be of a character of which the chief traits are kindness, gentleness and sensitiveness, the effect produced on him by these words will easily be understood, when his *rôle* had consisted in simply announcing to Moufetish that, by order of his Sovereign, he was to consider himself under arrest. Reaching his house, he was seized by a violent attack of nerves, and for several days his reason, even his life, hung in the balance. The greatest care had to be taken to ensure his ultimate recovery.

During this time the boat had weighed anchor and, ascending the Nile, had arrived at Dongola in the Sudan. There was on board a guard under a Colonel named Ishak Bey, whose orders were to treat the Moufetish well, but to prevent him from escaping, and, above all, to obtain possession of his seal. The Colonel could find nothing better to do than induce the unfortunate Minister to drink; knowing that in his state of health, and under the rays of the Sudanese sun, alcohol was fatal. Some days after their arrival in this town, Ishak Bey received imperative orders to recover the seal, and when he endeavoured to do so a terrible struggle took place betwixt him and the Moufetish. It was in the course of this struggle that the officer was severely bitten on the hand, and being unable to shake off his adversary, he was obliged to kill him. The wound which he received was of such a nature that, after his return to Cairo, and for many years after, he was obliged to wear a glove.

Whilst this tragedy was being enacted at Dongola, official bulletins, published in Cairo, announced to the public that the Moufetish, on account of his delicate condition, *had ascended the Nile for the benefit of his health !*

Such is the story as it was told to me by a person who is in a position to know the truth. My impression is that neither Ismail nor his *entourage* had thought of an assassination, but simply of an enforced exile, which the Sovereign considered indispensable for his interests.

On the fatal road which was leading him to ruin Ismail was unable to stop, and the hour came when, on the demand of France and England, who represented the principal creditors,

the Sultan, his Sovereign, deposed him, and, with tears in his eyes, he entered into exile. First he took refuge at Naples, in the Palace of La Favorita, which the King of Italy had placed at his disposal, whilst later he retired definitely to Constantinople.

His son, Tewfik Pasha, who succeeded him, died before him, when the present ruler mounted the throne, almost a stranger to his grandfather. It was a touching scene when, one day, the young Sovereign and the ancient exile met.

When the Khedivial yacht which carried Abbas Hilmi cast anchor before Constantinople, a superb boat, urged forward by many stout oarsmen, advanced rapidly, whilst in the stern, trembling with emotion, the ancient Khedive sat. He had come to embrace his grandson, the living representative of his country; for if there was one thing which Ismail loved even more than himself, it was the land where he had been born—Egypt, which, in his dreams, he had seen grow great and powerful. So, when he felt the end drawing near, he had but one desire, one thought, to die on the banks of the wondrous Nile, where he had known joy and sorrow, triumph and humiliation.

He wrote to his grandson, asking humbly for a corner in his native land, a corner, distant and solitary, where he could render up his soul to God. Abbas Hilmi would willingly have consented; but, from high political reasons, the request was refused by England. The days drew on. The old Khedive wrote once more. He was dying, the most celebrated physicians had placed it on record, and to their written word was attached a photograph, showing, alas, that he was at the gates of death. He begged that he might be allowed to be carried to his beloved land. But policy, which knows no sentiment, gives way not even to death: the refusal was curt and brief, and Ismail died in exile—far, as they said, from the country which he had ruined.

Ruined? I often ask myself if Ismail has done to Egypt all the wrong which is alleged. Certainly he led his country to bankruptcy and ceased to meet his bills. But, if we examine his balance-sheet carefully, we are forced to recognise that his credit was not far off his debit. His huge properties, the Sugar Works, the State Railways, the Telegraphs, his Palaces, the

Ghezireh Park, the State lands, all represented a colossal sum, the value of which could not have been far short of the £100,000,000 which he owed. As the private accounts of Ismail and those of the State were really one, it must be recognised that, foolishly as he squandered money on *fêtes* and amusements, he also devoted enormous sums to public works, whilst almost all the greatest and most important works which to-day constitute the wealth of Egypt were begun during his reign.

KHEDIVE TEWFIK

The best proof of what I have just said is that, after all, no one has lost anything, and many of the creditors have been paid sums well over the amounts actually due to them.

How many millions has England herself gained owing to the temporary embarrassment of Ismail? I shall give one example only: The Suez Canal shares, for which she paid £4,000,000, are to-day worth £32,000,000. What a pity for Egypt that England, who insisted that all the personal property of the Khedive should pass to the country, and that the Princes, his heirs, should give up what would have come to them, what a pity, I say, for Egypt, that England has not considered that these shares belonged also to the country and that she would give them up on payment of the £4,000,000! That, indeed, would have been *un beau geste!*

Apropos of this, when the affairs of the Daira, once the private property of Ismail, were wound up, this year with a surplus of £6,400,000, the heirs of the Khedive, who had abandoned their rights in favour of the creditors, expressed the opinion that it would be only right that they should share in this brilliant

operation. But Lord Cromer, with his usual frankness, sent them about their business.

I had an opportunity of discussing this question with the Financial Adviser, Sir Vincent Corbett, at the time when many foreigners were expressing their sympathy with the Princes, and I now give his reply.

"This is no question of sentiment but one of law, and which the law alone can decide. Let us take a simple example. X. owes £1000 and cannot pay; he says to Z., 'I have a property worth £1000, will you purchase it and pay off my debts?' Z. does so, arranges with the creditors, but, instead of re-selling the property at once, he keeps it, works it up, and at the end of a certain number of years, sells it at a big profit. Has X. any right to demand a share in that profit? Evidently not."

V. Gaintini

DR. COMANOS PASHA

The reasoning is apparently just, but to it the reply can be made that the engagements entered into with the Princes when they renounced their rights have not always been kept. I am assured, for example, that his Highness Prince Hussen Kamel Pasha ought to have received for land which he gave up to the State £24,000 per annum in lieu of £40,000 which the estate would have brought him in. A short time afterwards this sum was declared to be too high, and was reduced to £18,000, whilst scarcely a year later it was further reduced to £12,000, on the plea of the poverty of Egypt.

If the folly and prodigality of Ismail led to the intervention of France and England in the affairs of Egypt, so the weakness

of his successor Tewfik Pasha, who was unable to repress the revolution led by Arabi Pasha, led to the armed intervention of the English. Tewfik was gentleness and kindness personified. At the time of his death, which was rather sudden, the rumour spread abroad that he was on bad terms with the English, who would willingly have seen him out of the way. From that to the assertion that he had been poisoned was a short step, and belief in it spread rapidly.

I had occasion to speak with Dr. Comanos Pasha, physician to the Khedive, to whom was entrusted the official inquest on behalf of the Government, when he made the following statement:

"It is quite wrong to suppose that the Khedive was on bad terms with the English. They had, on the contrary, complete confidence in him; and the understanding was so good between them that, had Tewfik Pasha lived a little longer, it is almost certain that England would have evacuated Egypt. His Highness has often said to me in speaking of them, 'Certainly, I do not love them; but I am deeply grateful, for it is to them I owe the fact that, to-day, I am Khedive of Egypt. Without them, where should I or my children have been?' Therefore, far from wishing his removal, the English, who knew that they could count on him, desired that his reign should continue."

According to Dr. Comanos Pasha's official report, Khedive Tewfik died of influenza, complicated by double pneumonia and acute nephritis. Had Tewfik Pasha the presentiment of coming death? One would almost believe so when one remembers that, a few months before his death took place, taking advantage of the holidays which the heir apparent Abbas was then enjoying in Egypt, he decreed him to be of age, although he had not reached the customary number of years. It was this decree which avoided a Regency, and permitted the present Khedive to ascend the throne on the death of his father, although, legally, he had not attained his majority.

Al Vista

THE KHEDIVE'S STUD-FARM

CHAPTER VIII

reigned from 1892 deposed Dec. 18 - 1914

THE KHEDIVE ABBAS HILMI

His Highness Khedive Abbas Hilmi—The man and the Sovereign—His accession—His feelings as regards France and England—First interview at the Abdine Palace—Story of his Highness' railway—An afternoon at the Palace of Koubbeh and visit to the estates—Excursion with his Highness on the Ismailia Canal—Visit to the Palace of Montazah and lunch with his Highness—Excursion with the Khedive on his Mariout Railway—The opinion of his Highness on the present state of affairs and on England's policy in Egypt.

CALLED suddenly in 1891 to ascend the throne, his Highness the Khedive Abbas Hilmi left Vienna, where he was finishing his studies, and arrived in Egypt, with, in spite of his youth, very clear and decided views in regard to his rights and duties as a Sovereign. Not having been able to appreciate personally the *rôle* which England played in his country, it was only natural that he should resent the presence of a foreign army on the soil of his native land, and it was with a heart full of misgiving that he returned.

A certain number of his *entourage*, along with several foreigners, more or less connected with friendly Governments, all fishers in troubled waters, took advantage of this state of affairs to urge the young Sovereign, then without experience, to a complete rupture with England, assuring him that, on the

day of the struggle, French bayonets and Russian Cossacks would be there to back him up.

Very brave, very sure of himself, the Khedive one day took the great step and showed England the door; then, looking round for his backers he found . . . space. Those even who had most strongly persuaded him had quietly disappeared. In 1878, at the gates of Constantinople, England had cried to Russia, "So far, and no farther!" And the Colossus of the North had stopped.

Twenty years later, at Fashoda, England cried once more, this time to France, "Halt!" And the Republic, rich and powerful, recoiled before the Mistress of the Seas.

So, in reply to the move of the Khedive, the English replied, "We are the strongest, here we shall remain." And Egypt, very weak at this time, had to submit.

It is true that England had the good taste to add: "We desire nothing more than your welfare, we recognise your title of Sovereign, and we seek simply to help you with all the means at our disposal to regenerate your country."

The blow was a hard one, but it was worth more than ten years' experience to his Highness. The young Prince knew then the value of friendships, he understood the weakness of his country and his own power. He accepted the advice of England in regard to the administration of his affairs, whilst jealously guarding all his prerogatives as a Sovereign, and making them respected.

At first he refused the hand of friendship which had been held out to him, for he desired before giving his confidence to the English to see them at work, so that relations at that time were cold, official, and distant. With extraordinary determination and energy he set himself to study the needs of his country; and, little by little, the knowledge dawned on him that England was keeping her word, and was working sincerely and honestly for the good of Egypt.

Then, and only then, was peace made, and the year which saw the *rapprochement* between England and France also saw his Highness paying a friendly visit to King Edward, *fêted* and petted by London.

In the course of many conversations I have had with the

Khedive, he has himself assured me that his relations with England, with his English Advisers and other Councillors and employees, are excellent, and that there is no desire on his part or on that of his Ministers to thwart in any way the work of civilisation and regeneration, with which he associates himself with his whole heart. I am also able to declare that his Highness is satisfied with the existing condition of affairs, and that, until Egypt shall have attained to a degree of civilisation and power which will permit her to stand by herself, she infinitely prefers to lean on England and to profit by the advice of the greatest colonising nation on the face of the earth, than seek help from any other of the great Powers. This does not prevent Abbas Hilmi from having for certain of these Powers a real affection and a profound admiration. His Highness has a special liking for France, where each year, at Divonne, he spends a summer holiday, living quietly there the life of an ordinary French gentleman.

The popular imagination which would like to represent the Khedive in a luxurious Palace, passing his days lolling on a sofa in the midst of a mass of cushions, eating sweetmeats or smoking a hubble-bubble, inhaling the perfume of flowers—the popular imagination I say would receive a severe shock in learning that the Khedive is in fact the busiest man in Egypt. It would be difficult for any man to lead a fuller, more active and more energetic life. Official duties, laws to study, decrees to sign, Ministerial Councils to preside over, audiences, receptions, reviews, all the occupations, in fact, of a Sovereign would be considered by most to be work enough. Nevertheless, besides these, his Highness finds time for breeding live-stock and for farming on a large scale, for improving his properties, for constructing entire new quarters in both town and village, for bringing under cultivation huge tracts of land up till now arid and abandoned, for travelling over by rail, yacht, dahabeah, carriage and motor, on horseback or camelback, his vast estates, and above all, for constructing, with his own money, a line of railway, destined to unite Tripoli with Egypt. Neither must it be thought that the Khedive only occupies himself with the outlines of these schemes, leaving to others the filling in of details. That would be a great error.

His Highness certainly possesses advisers and employees of undoubted value, such as the Head of his Daira Kassa (Household), his Excellency de Martino Pasha, who renders him great services; but it is none the less true that the Khedive studies deeply all questions which touch on his interests, and makes himself master of every detail.

The principal residences of the Khedive are: the Palace d'Abdine, at Cairo, where all official receptions take place; the Palace of Koubbeh, in the country, six miles from town, where his Highness spends the greater part of the year with his august spouse, the Khedivah, and their children; the Palace of Alexandria; and finally, the Palace of Montazah, situated on the sea-shore some few miles from that port.

Dittrich

H.E. DE MARTINO PASHA

It was at the Palace d'Abdine that I had first the honour of being received by his Highness in company with the Hon. W. Riddle, the United States Minister. The time is long since past when any unimportant Consul could present himself at the Palace in short jacket and soft hat, asking audience, whether it suited the Khedive or not. What the weakness of Tewfik had allowed had short shrift when he was gone, and Abbas Hilmi knew from the first day how to play the part of Sovereign, and as such to demand the respect due to him. It is hardly needful to add, therefore, that, as in all the Foreign Courts, the representatives of other countries must address their demand for an audience to the Grand Master of Ceremonies, who transmits it to his Highness, and that one cannot be received except in full uniform or frock-coat and tall hat. Below, in the Hall, the soldiers of

the guard are lined up, whilst at the head of the staircase we find the Masters of the Ceremonies and Chamberlains, who introduce us into a huge ante-room. After a few minutes have passed we are conducted into the reception-room, where his Highness awaits us. He comes towards us smiling, his hand outstretched, and after a vigorous shake, we seat ourselves, and, cigarettes lighted, begin our conversation, first of all in English, then in French. The Khedive speaks both languages perfectly, besides German and, naturally, Turkish and Arabic.

Reiser

H.E. BOUTROS PASHA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Even his bitterest political enemies acknowledge willingly the personal charm of this Prince. One of them had said to me: "Certainly, you will find him charming, that is just the word one would apply, he is a charmer and he will charm you, but—look out!" I did not "look out," nor do I find myself any the worse.

The conversation turned to the voyage which I contemplated taking into the Sudan and on the African railways. I took the liberty of asking information from his Highness in regard to the line of railway which he is constructing at his own expense between Alexandria and Tripoli.

He replied as follows: "The country which extends to the west of Alexandria towards Tripoli is quite unknown to travellers. It is generally thought to be an immense desert, with a few oases, distant twenty or thirty days' camel march. Nevertheless, a huge number of caravans cross this desert, either from these oases or from Tripoli, bringing all manner of goods to the Alexandria markets.

"I decided one day to make a long trip on horseback

through this unknown land. To my great surprise, instead of finding a sandy desert as I had expected, I found a rich soil excellently suited to cultivation. The soil is not as dark in colour as that watered by the Nile, but it is evident that it has, under the Romans, supported a large population. Everywhere we saw the remains of towns, villages, and farms, occupied at one time by the Romans. There are in this supposed desert enough stones to build a hundred villages.

"One evening I pitched my camp by the side of the great track. I had not a wink of sleep. The whole night through an uninterrupted procession of caravans passed. So, whilst listening through the long hours to the heavy, slow tread of the camels, and the shrill whistle of their drivers, I thought of the hours, days, weeks, even months which these Bedouins spent on the journey, and I said to myself: 'Since there are so many of them why not make a railway? It will be a good thing for them, and, very likely, a good thing for the makers.'

"When later on, far away towards Tripoli, I saw the rich oases whose products were tied up, the cattle which could not be sold, the animals fed on figs and dates for which there was no market, my mind was soon made up, I set to work immediately and began the construction of the line."

"And the results have been satisfactory?" I asked.

"Satisfactory? I am delighted. So far I have only laid down about sixty miles, but already, in goods alone and for the first year, we have carried 1000 tons, this year we shall reach 6000 and more. At the beginning I put down a narrow-gauge track, but that I soon found out was a mistake, and now we have the standard gauge. As we proceed towards the oases, traffic will become more and more important. Lately I was present at a large market held at the terminus of the line. Caravans had come in from Tripoli itself, and, to give you an idea of the importance of the meeting, I can tell you that there were no less than 22,000 sheep there. The market itself was most picturesque, for there the Bedouins in the most primitive state had come together. Much of the business done was simple barter, very little money being current. A horse could be had for forty francs. My intention is to encourage the

population to open in the villages served by the railway markets and fairs on fixed dates."

"And finally," I said, "to where does your Highness intend to extend the line?"

Quite excited, his face lit up with mingled energy and hope, the Khedive replied:

"To where? Why certainly in time to the frontiers of Tripoli, when I hope that there will then be men intelligent and enterprising enough to construct a line from there which will join with mine. Think how one could then come to Egypt, with a sea passage from Messina to Tripoli of only fifteen hours, instead of the three days necessary from Brindisi to Alexandria, or the five days from Marseilles to the same port.

"A *train de luxe* leaving Paris and Berlin would carry passengers to Messina, whilst another would conduct them from Tripoli to Cairo. This service could run twice or three times a week or even daily in the high season."

Talking of railways led the Khedive to tell us the following story of his sister, the Princess Hadidja Hanum, who with her husband, Prince Abbas Alim, had visited the St. Louis Exhibition:

"I have always had a great desire," he said, "to visit the States, and never dreamed that my sister would go there before me. When she returned she brought me a magnificent collection of photographs, several of which were taken under anything but ordinary circumstances. Once, for instance, the Princess had the bad luck to meet with a railway accident, but, instead of losing her presence of mind like most of the people round her, she calmly photographed the unusual scene. Then again when she found herself on board a petrol boat which had taken fire, she did the same."

So this Egyptian Princess, in the land of the strong-minded and independent woman, showed her calmness and presence of mind.

It is not only towards the frontier of Tripoli that his Highness has directed his energies. In the heart of Cairo itself he has shown an example to his subjects of how to build. I have already mentioned in a previous chapter how the entire

population of this city has been bitten by the mania for building. On all sides new erections are springing up; but, as the builders are anxious only to make money and make it quickly, the houses are badly constructed, and as cheaply as possible, so that as rents are very high, 12 to 15 per cent. is easily returned on

Dittrich

THE CHILDREN OF H.H. THE KHEDIVE

the capital expended. But how long will these miserable barracks last?

His Highness decided to build and create an entirely new quarter, but not on the lines of the jerry-builder. The flats which he is erecting on his property will be the first thoroughly up-to-date houses in Cairo, containing every modern comfort, lift, telephone, bath-room, &c. But they will only return 7 or 8 per cent. However, there is every chance that they will continue to yield this long after the 15 per cent. tenements will have collapsed.

A short time after my return from the Soudan, I had an audience of the Khedive at Abdine, where his Highness very kindly invited me to spend an afternoon with him at his Palace of Koubbeh. A pleasant drive of about an hour brought me to my destination. I had scarcely mounted the marble steps before I saw his Highness approaching, without any ceremony, one hand outstretched in welcome, the other in the pocket of his flannel jacket.

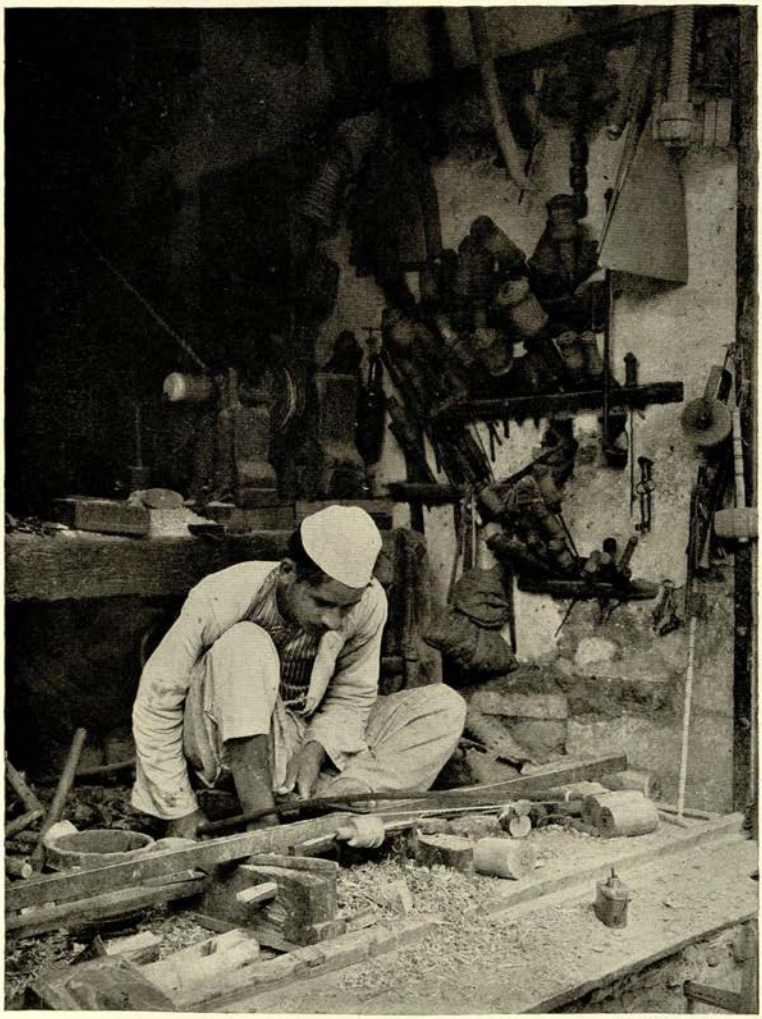
"Charmed to see you in my real home," he said, leading me into a *salon*, where, seated on a large sofa, he added, "for, you see, this is where I really live, never at Cairo. The Palace d'Abdine only serves for official receptions, and I have never once slept there. Even after the annual ball which I give, in the middle of the night I return here.

"I love this country, where, though within easy reach of town and my Ministers, I can find quiet, and where, laying aside etiquette and form, I can live the life of a gentleman farmer."

On a table at his side his Highness unrolled a large coloured plan of his property, on which he showed me the tour which we were to take together. Within a huge circle all the land belonged to him, whilst a mile or two further on, on the banks of the Ismailiah Canal, his Highness possesses another magnificent estate. His dream had been to join this up with that of Koubbeh, but the value of the ground had increased to such an extent and with such rapidity that he has found it impossible.

"These lands," explained his Highness, "are the best in Egypt. I purchased mine a few years ago for £30 a feddan (about 4400 square metres), to-day I cannot buy a feddan more for £200.

"You will no doubt have noticed," he continued, "that my family has no old castles, no old palaces, with the exception of the official one at Cairo, and it is impossible for me to speak of the homes of my ancestors. Custom decrees that the Palaces inhabited by them during their lives always in the country, shall at their deaths be destroyed. This property is the only one which has been more or less inhabited since the time of Ibrahim Pasha, but it was then only



David Gardiner

A TURNER

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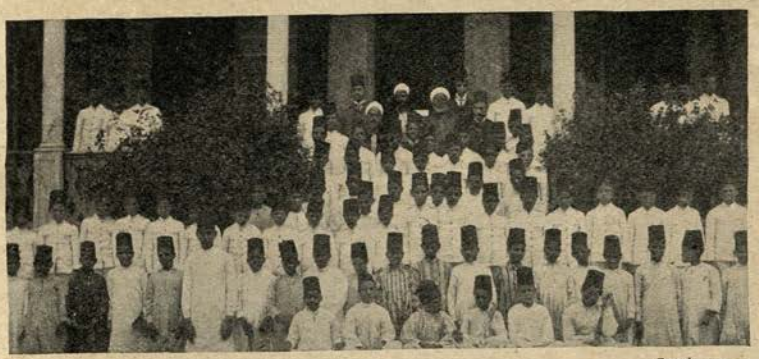
a small building. I have myself had this huge Palace erected, and all the outbuildings which I am about to show you."

From the top of the steps I noticed that the garden was in a state of confusion, huge ditches, heaps of stones and a hundred or so of men busy with pick and shovel.

"I am entirely remaking my garden," explained the Khedive, "and for the work I have brought from France the greatest master of modern gardening, M. André."

At the foot of the marble staircase a small basket phaeton,



Sanderson

PUPILS OF THE KHEDIVE'S PRIVATE SCHOOL

shaded by a huge umbrella and drawn by a couple of smart little ponies, awaited us. His Highness took the reins, I seated myself by his side, and, accompanied by a single groom perched behind, we drove off at a rattling pace, under the practised guidance of the Khedive. Following a long shady avenue, consisting of old trees, and passing a little mosque whose minaret shone clear against the deep blue of the sky, we entered a charming garden, in the centre of which rose a building of bright and pleasant appearance.

"I am taking you," explained his Highness, "to the private school which I have founded, and where I have some two hundred children educated at my expense. Their course of study continues for five years, at the end of which I find them billets on one or other of my properties. In a word, I manufacture here all the servants and employees I require."

I had never before seen a school-house so airy, so sunny,

and so gay, and I could hardly hide my surprise. The light-coloured walls were covered with pictures and designs, whilst air and sunshine streamed in at the immense windows. The children of the first and second classes wear the fez and white Egyptian robes, whilst in the other three classes, the scholars, now almost grown up, wear a uniform of white linen with gilt buttons. Everything was so clean, so dainty, that I quite envied these little urchins with their clever and happy faces.

The curriculum is a special one, having for its object the making of good stewards and bailiffs. Reading, writing and arithmetic are taught, also care of man and beast, surveying, &c. It is an exceedingly interesting work, and does honour to his Highness and to the teachers, who evidently have at heart the maintenance of a very high degree of efficiency.

Re-entering the carriage we visited successively the huge buildings in which are stored the cotton crops, the record offices, the fire-brigade station, and at last, after the ponies had given us a taste of their galloping powers, the huge stud-farm, where his Highness rears innumerable horses, amongst which I caught a glimpse of some beautiful young Arab thoroughbreds. Further on, in the green pastures, were the lovely Swiss and Jersey cows, and, huge and wonderful, the ghamousahs. Those who have only seen the thin miserable ghamousahs of the poor peasant would hardly recognise as the same animal the beautiful specimens of his Highness.

Leaving the Koubbeh property and preceded by a mounted gendarme, we rapidly covered the country separating us from the second estate. In the villages which we passed through, the inhabitants ran forward to greet their Sovereign with a graceful salute, bowing low and laying their right hands on their hearts. We arrived shortly at a large stretch of land lying considerably higher than the surrounding country, at the end of which was a large brickfield.

"This land," explained the Khedive, "lay so high that it was always impossible to irrigate it, and it was therefore considered good for nothing. However, I found out that the earth was excellent for brick-making, so I purchased it, and now, whilst making bricks, I am gradually bringing it down to the

level of the surrounding country. These bricks bring me in more than the cost of the land and the work."

Passing through the highly cultivated fields and plantations of cotton, the growing of which the Khedive, himself an expert, clearly explained, we arrived at the Ismailia Canal, where his Highness has placed a steam-engine which, after pumping water during the day, supplies the power for the electric light at night.

At last, after a visit to the little villages constructed for his labourers, we stopped on our return in the garden, where an immense tree, broken down with age, spreads its branches, many of which are dead. It is the tree of the Virgin, the tree under which tradition says the Holy Family rested.

"What do you think?" said the Khedive. "In his guide-book on Egypt, M. Joanne relates that the tree of the Virgin is situated in the garden of *an old Copt!* I had the pleasure of meeting M. Joanne one summer at Divonne, when I said to him, 'My dear Sir, I am willing to pass the "old," but a "Copt," no, thank you!'"

Entering the Palace once more, ices were brought us, and whilst for an hour I sat there, under the charm of his conversation, of the historical recollections which he brought to life, I admired his keen wit, his power of sound criticism, and his large and broad-minded outlook on affairs. He has a truly wonderful memory, and a circle of acquaintances as varied as it is numerous.

Some time after this visit, the Khedive invited me to make another and very interesting excursion with him. Leaving the Palace of Koubbeh at nine in the morning, we drove as far as the Ismailia Canal, where one of his Highness's yachts awaited us. Standing on the bridge, he took the wheel and we began our voyage.

"This canal," remarked the Khedive, "runs from Cairo to Ismailia, whence it carries the fresh water of the Nile. Like so many other important works it is due to the initiative of French engineers. They even thought of widening and deepening it in order to make Cairo a seaport. Ah!" added his Highness, "how many things in this country are due to the enterprise and labour of France! I was calculating the other

day that her material interests in Egypt must amount to over £200,000,000, and she has abandoned all that for Morocco, in which she has none."

Whilst he was speaking I took the opportunity of watching this Sovereign, so simple, so wholly un-oriental, clad in a suit of tweeds, yellow boots, not a jewel, not a decoration, with every look of the perfect gentleman, to which was added, for the time being, that of the skilled yachtsman.

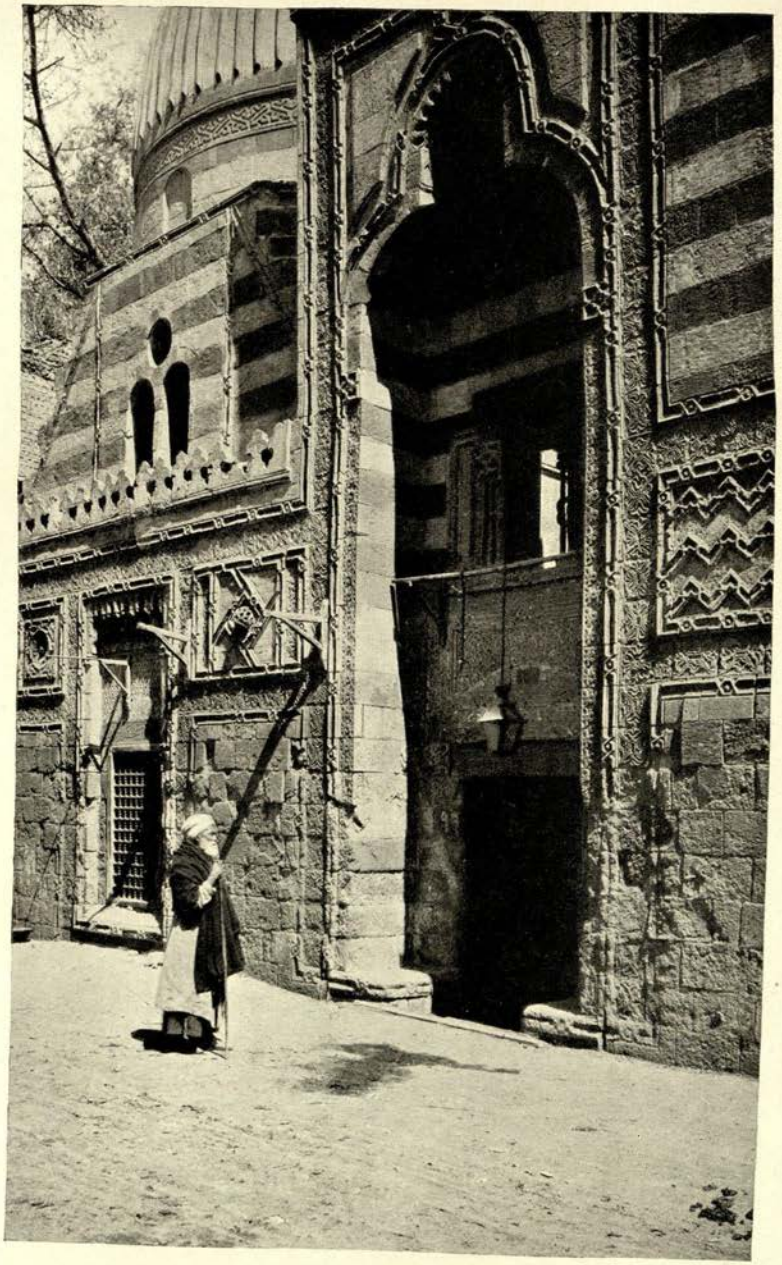
Soon we passed the prison of Abou Zabâd, the largest in Egypt, where several hundreds of convicts, strictly watched

Al Vista

A CANAL

over by armed guards, are employed in breaking stones. Under the sand of the Desert, at a depth of a few yards, are beds of stone, much in demand at Cairo and elsewhere. The convicts, at the approach of the Khedivial yacht, were drawn up alongside the canal, with backs turned, for those poor wretches have not even the right of looking on their Sovereign. The guards alone fronted and saluted. The prison passed, the Khedive handed over the wheel to the captain, and making me sit at his side, he said:

"I am going to tell you now the history of the estate which we are about to visit. Some years ago, travelling on this canal, I noticed, as you may now, that on the left bank the lands, properly irrigated by the Nile water which the canal has brought for many years, are highly cultivated and very rich. Look at them. Have you ever seen a richer or more fruitful soil? The villages are numerous and the people



EXTERIOR OF A MOSQUE, CAIRO

David Gardiner

prosperous. On the contrary, to the right there lay nothing but pestilential swamps, holes and hillocks, quagmires stretching back for one or two miles, and after that, the Desert, rising to a certain height, for, as you know, the Desert is far from being always flat and low.

"Suddenly an idea struck me. You know how it is only necessary to bring the Nile water on to the sand of the Desert to make it fertile. I thought then, that in filling up these marshes, in levelling them and covering them with sand brought from the Desert, and finally in making the necessary irrigation works, I could obtain excellent land.

"Etiquette alone prevented those to whom I spoke of my scheme from laughing in my face and calling me a fool, but they could not prevent my seeing that they considered it impossible. In spite of all these adverse opinions I set to work, buying the land, and appealing to the population on the other bank. Hundreds of bullocks and mules were employed in doing the work.

"At last, to make a long story short, the experiment, begun on a small scale, has succeeded far beyond my hopes. To-day I have an estate of 2500 feddans. Everything included, the land had cost me £15 per feddan. What happened then? The villagers on the other side of the canal are fighting for who shall have the use of the land, and I now lease it at about £5 per feddan, an operation which brings me in a clear 30 per cent.

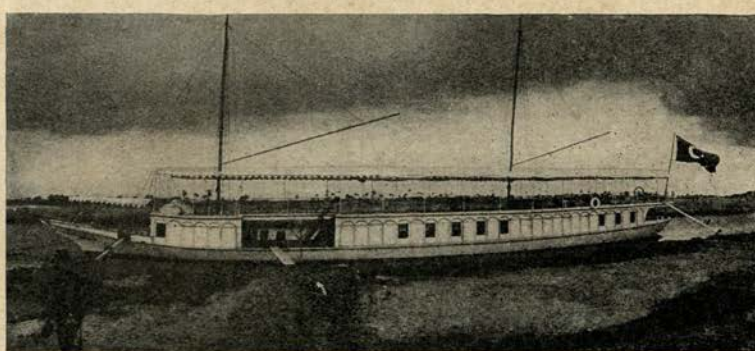
"Content? Of course I am; but my satisfaction comes less, I can assure you, from my success as a financier than from the pleasure I have gained in seeing these dead lands brought back to life, and to see the crops green or golden stretch out to-day where yesterday was arid sand or hideous swamps. Look around you. Formerly there was nothing here but marshes and quagmires."

And, in fact, as far as the eye could see, to the beginning of the Great Desert, the canal was bordered on our right by fields admirably tilled, and giving all the signs of a great fertility.

"And think," said his Highness, "that from the first year we took crops off this land, which yesterday was sand, and that

without a trace of manure! The waters of the Nile and the sunshine of Egypt were all that were required to perform this miracle."

Towards mid-day we arrived at the outskirts of the estate, where the Khedive is at present building huge stables and cattle-sheds, also a large dwelling-house for his steward and his employees, a house in which he is reserving for himself a very comfortable *pied-à-terre*. As the building is not yet ready, his Highness, who pays a visit every week, keeps a superb



Sanderson

KHEDIVE'S DAHABEAH

dahabeah, one of the most beautiful I have ever seen, on board of which he has a large bedroom, bath-room, drawing-room, dining-room, &c.

It was on the dahabeah that we lunched *en tête-à-tête*, a *déjeuner* simple but good, to which his Highness, a famous trencherman, did due honour; whilst I, with an appetite whetted by our long journey, played an excellent second. The Khedive touches no alcohol, does not smoke, and will not gamble.

"Believe me," he said, whilst leaving me to enjoy a liqueur alone and to smoke a rare cigar, "I do not pose as a saint. Wine does not agree with me, nor does tobacco, and gambling is a thing I simply fail to understand. I have passed hours at Ostend watching the players lose and gain thousands, but nothing on earth would have persuaded me to do the same. With me dislike of gambling is instinctive, I take no credit for it."

Conversation having thus turned to the subject of vice we spoke of Cairo, when his Highness informed me that in this town prostitution is hereditary, descending from mother to daughter! This awful condition of affairs is due to atavism, these women resembling beasts rather than human beings. They are in all things absolutely ignorant, except, unfortunately, in what concerns vice. At that, alas, they are expert, before the age of puberty.

"And what is most terrible," he said, "is that at the age of twelve or fourteen years these girls are affected by the most terrible diseases, which they spread amongst our soldiers. We are obliged to examine all those whom we send into the Sudan, in order that the germs of these diseases should not be spread."

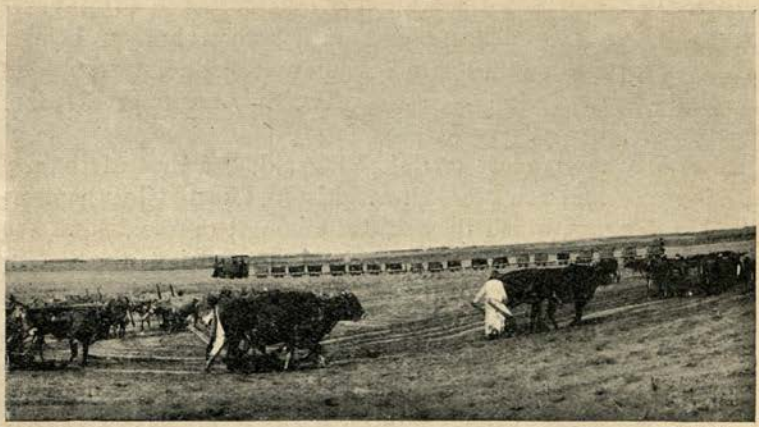
His Highness went on to talk of his last visit to England and of the many amusing incidents which had occurred. He often closed his eyes . . . to see clearer. What a thousand pities it is that he cannot publish his impressions! *Ce serait délicieux.*

"But of all these pleasant recollections," he said, "the pleasantest is that left on my mind by King Edward, for whom both as a Sovereign and a man I have a deep and sincere admiration."

During the lunch, heavy black clouds, such as I had never before seen in Egypt, had swung overhead, the wind whistled, and soon there came down a perfect deluge. But the Khedive fears neither wind nor rain, and, without overcoats, we mounted our horses and proceeded to visit the different parts of the estate. In the course of our ride I saw land already two years under cultivation, with young crops of wheat, barley, or onions, others newly sown, others again, on which the levelling had just been completed and finished, which were now being irrigated, and, lastly, those which were still in the course of being levelled.

Animals are no longer being used for bringing the sand from the desert, a small railway of the Decauville type having been laid down. Two trains, each composed of twenty waggons, come and go continually. The thirty-five journeys a day made by these trains are calculated to do the work of 400 mules. But to me the most interesting sight was the way in which the

sand, once deposited at the required spot, was levelled by a process certainly unknown elsewhere. Thirty bullocks, har-



Al Vista

LEVELLING LAND WITH BULLOCKS

nessed to what appeared to be huge boxes, each with an arm allowing them to be raised or lowered, turn in a circle, their

Al Vista

H.H. THE KHEDIVE WATCHING THE LEVELLING

boxes being filled where the earth is raised, and emptied where it is hollow. The contrast between the railway, so modern and so noisy, and the silent bullocks with their ancient but

effective leveller, was most striking. The Khedive loves thus to visit his estates, far from the noise of the town, and to take a run over them, accompanied by his steward.

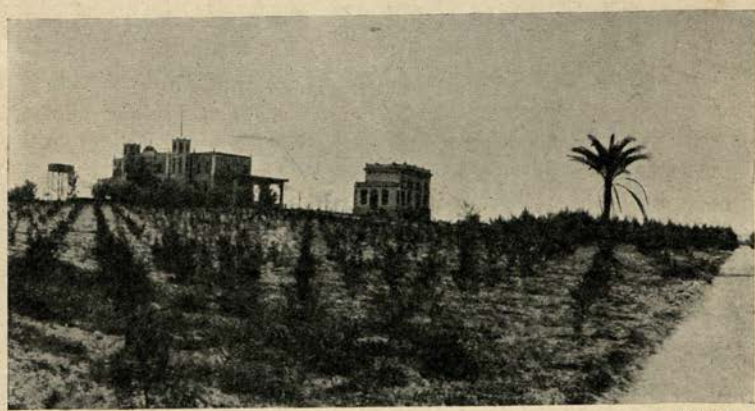
After having returned for a snack on board the dahabeah we proceeded on horseback through a drenching rain to the station of Euchas, where the special train of his Highness awaited to take us back to Cairo.

At the beginning of this chapter I had something to say in regard to the railway at present being laid down, at Abbas Hilmi's private expense, between Alexandria and Tripoli. Knowing my interest in these questions, his Highness expressed the desire that, before my departure from Egypt, I should pass the day with him in making a short tour of inspection of the new line. On this occasion it was at the Palace of Montazah that I was received by the Khedive, shortly before 9 A.M. Of all the Khedivial Palaces Montazah is the least known. In fact, with the exception of his intimate friends, a few advisers and others invited there for special purposes, no one knows Montazah: it is considered as a sanctuary, where the public is not admitted, and where official functions are generally taboo. What is vaguely known of it is that, only a few years ago, the ground covered by this property was a wilderness of sand dunes, which Abbas Hilmi, with his customary energy, has transformed into a garden of delight. My train took me to the private station at Montazah, where I found a carriage waiting.

The entrance to the estate is guarded by immense gates of stone, in the semblance of a citadel; behind lie beautiful avenues of trees, lined with flower-beds and nurseries, at the end of which, and in the midst of clumps of trees, two white Palaces overlook the sea, whose blue stretches far into the distance to mix with the deeper azure of the sky, whilst between the two gleam the white and graceful sails of many native craft. On the immense terrace of the Palace his Highness awaited me and led me into his study, a large room, bright and sunny. Here everything speaks of the works which interest the Sovereign. The walls are covered with maps and plans of his estates, the tables loaded with reports and estimates. Behind his desk I noticed a large photograph of a powerful

locomotive, "belonging," his Highness explained, "to the Northern Railway Company of France, and on which, between Paris and Calais, I once did seventy-eight miles an hour." A few minutes later we were seated in a small trap drawn by two very old ponies.

"These are the first I ever had," said the Khedive, "given to me as a child to teach me to drive. Would you believe it that they are twenty-five years old? They live here happy and



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PALACE OF MONTAZAH

peaceful in quiet retirement. I only use them now for short drives, but you will see what pluck they still have and how they rush their hills."

Following a beautiful road, planted with trees, we reached a quay of dressed stone, which runs round the entire bay of Montazah, and forms an excellent harbour.

"Here," said the Khedive, "I have wished to have a home for spring and autumn. I began modestly, buying a few acres of sand dunes. To them I brought the water of the Nile, and immediately, the sand, transformed into soil, became fruitful, trees and flowers sprang up. Then, little by little, I added and added, until now I have created quite an estate, consisting to-day of 4000 feddans.

"First of all I built a small Palace for my own use; later I had a second Palace built for my family in a veritable oasis.

The children are so happy here and enjoy their perfect liberty so much that it is a pleasure to bring them."

Round about the Palace, scattered in the grounds, are summer-houses, grottos, masses of flowers, wild and cultivated, and in a little creek, shallow and sheltered, the salt-water bath for the young Princes. Further on are large hen-houses and rabbit hutches, the latter on a rocky piece of soil where the rabbits cannot burrow and escape; a monster dovecot, containing thousands of birds, from the top of which can be had a superb view of the estate and the Mediterranean coast line as far as Alexandria. Across the fields, ablaze with poppies, the road leads past fir plantations to a small park where fifteen thousand mulberry bushes have been planted, the leaves of which serve for food for innumerable silkworms. Thence we passed to the farms, the stables, and, lastly, to the engine-house, where two enormous dynamos furnish the electric light necessary.

"I will show you," said his Highness, "the use to which we put this power in the daytime. Come in here and have a look at the joiners' shop and the saw-mill. Here we make the doors, windows, all the woodwork required by all the houses on all my estates, as well as the finer class of work, such as the Arabic carving for my Palaces."

It was a pleasant sight, this up-to-date carpenters' shop, with its workmen smiling and happy, stopping their work to greet us. His Highness had a word for all, examining their work, praising, criticising. Many of the workmen had been in his service for more than ten years. With his workmen as with his servants, if they do their work well, the Khedive is an excellent master. He does for them all that he can, but he is exacting and expects everything in return. The workmen were well-dressed, and I noticed with astonishment that one of them was indulging in beautiful socks and patent leather pumps. "Don't be surprised," said the Khedive; "he comes from Alexandria, and the Alexandrians are the most coquettish people in the world. They would rather starve than be ill-dressed." And I, astonished at the elegance of the fair ladies I had seen there!

We stopped for a moment before a small building containing

the private telegraph and telephone of his Highness. The Khedive has found means to be independent of the English in this matter, and is able to wire to any place in Europe without making use of the English cables. This has been accomplished by the simple expedient of uniting Montazah by a private wire with the Ottoman telegraphs, which run from the frontier to Constantinople by way of Asia Minor. Montazah being connected by telephone with the other Khedivial Palaces, his Highness is thus quite independent.

Through an avenue bordered with orange-trees in flower, and lined with nurseries of young apricot and peach-trees, we returned to the Palace for lunch. In the large dining-room, the enormous table was bare, but at a small table in a bow window two places were laid. The lunch was excellent, and during its course I had occasion to admire the exquisite service of gold, which I was glad to hear had come from Paris, from Leroy in fact. It was during this lunch that I had the opportunity of discussing the question of religion with his Highness. I was aware that the Khedive was very religious, and that on this question his *intransigeance* was extreme. Whilst respecting the other religions which are established in Egypt, he absolutely forbids any foreign interference in the affairs of the religion of which in Egypt he is head. The English are well aware of this fact, and have clearly declared that they have no desire to interfere.

"It is a question," he said to me, "on which I consult my conscience alone, and nothing can influence it. They could cut my head off before I should renounce one of these rights or duties which I consider sacred. In this question I have my whole people with me, and they, no more than I, would permit the smallest attack on our beliefs."

"I have heard it asserted, Sir, in certain quarters, that you had a dream of replacing, with the help of England, the Sultan as the head of the Mussulman world, of seizing Mecca, and being proclaimed Chief of Islam."

"That is nonsense," replied his Highness, shrugging his shoulders, "a slander put into circulation by men to whose interest it is to harm me in the eyes of the Sultan."

"Then, Sir, to put it in a different way, do you not believe

David Gardiner

THE COURT OF A MOSQUE, CAIRO

that England may have thought of making use of your Highness and of the Mussulmans of Egypt and India to counteract German influence at Constantinople ? "

" Thoughts come and thoughts go. Englishmen may have had such ideas, but I doubt it. They should know by this time that I would not lend myself to any combination which would have the effect of allowing a Christian nation to influence the destinies of Islam. And besides," he added, " I fail to see in what way England would benefit."

My own opinion is that it would be no advantage to England to increase the power of the Khedive and to put into his hands, with the hope of controlling it, the immense power of Islam, which would enable him, one day to rise, if he wished, against his protectors with a very real chance of success—for we know what Mussulman fanaticism can do once it is roused.

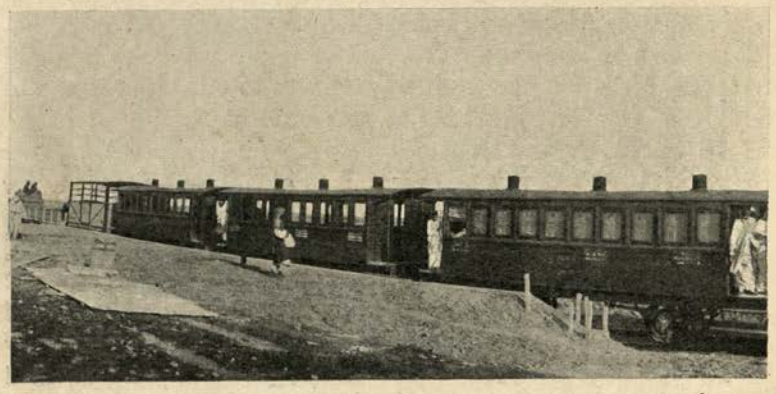
Immediately after lunch we left the Palace for the station, where we found the train of which his Highness makes use on his excursions along the Mariout line. It was composed of a locomotive, almost entirely covered with brass, brilliantly polished, whilst the latter part was formed by a glass-panelled *salon*, from whence the Sovereign himself could drive the train. To this unique engine was attached a large saloon car and an ordinary carriage for the servants, who had brought with them our five o'clock tea, or rather ices.

Rapidly covering the distance between Montazah and Alexandria with its suburbs, we arrived at the terminus of the State Railways, the station and sheds of which serve equally for his Highness's line. On all sides lay enormous heaps of rails, bolts, and nuts, for use on the new line. At a short distance from the station, the railway crosses, by an embankment some three miles in extent, the Lake of Mariout, composed, as one could tell from the enormous blocks of salt alongside the embankment, of salt water. The new line has now a length of sixty miles, not, as many suppose, across barren desert, but through highly cultivated land, a large quantity of which his Highness has bought.

We were now in the land of the Bedouins, those terrible freebooters, armed with their long guns, who, far from being opposed to the railway, are intensely interested in it. Many

of them work on the line as well as on the construction of the telephone, of which over one hundred miles were then complete. Business is brisk, and the trains which we pass, carrying men, animals and goods, are crowded.

Charming little villages, constructed by his Highness, replace here and there the wretched tents in which the Bedouins lived; and there is no doubt that the inhabitants of this lost



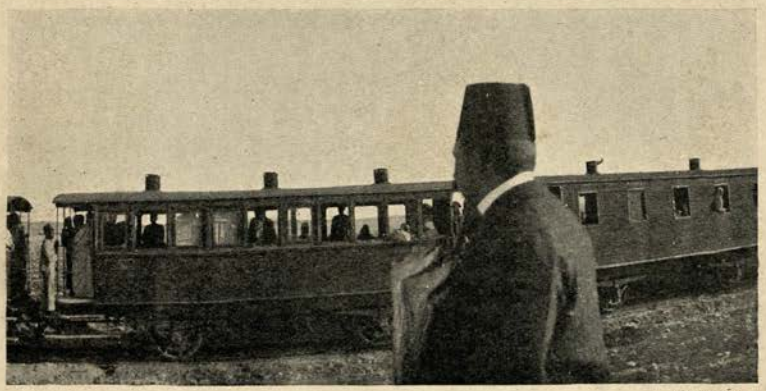
H.H. THE KHEDIVE AND—

and forgotten land are only too pleased that the Khedive has come to call them to another and a better existence. If at first they were somewhat shy, to-day they have become quite friendly, and they await with impatience the time when the line shall be completed, and a regular and paying trade established between the rich country of Tripoli and the markets of Alexandria and Cairo.

We had our refreshment at the actual terminus, in the doorway of a small house, simple as the tent of a soldier, in which the Khedive resides occasionally when inspecting the works, and from which we could hear the Bedouins, under the direction of his Highness's officers, singing at their task of completing the two hundred miles which still separates them from the frontier of Tripoli.

Whilst seated in the saloon car on our return journey the Khedive explained that this line, entirely a business one and

a private one in every meaning of the word, had not, and could not have, any political purpose; only certain people, who have now awakened to the commercial importance of the scheme, would like to create trouble by hinting that the Khedive has political ends in view. But the two most interested Powers, Turkey and Italy, know perfectly that the Mariout Railway is not and will not become a menace, but will constitute a



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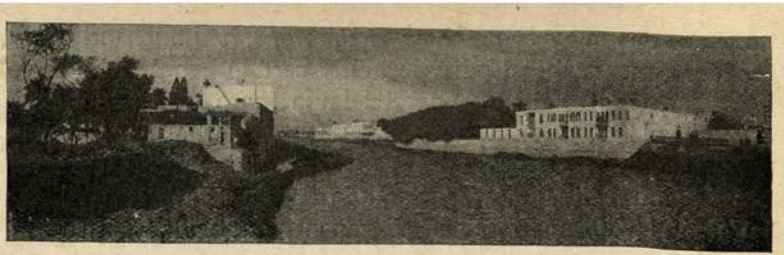
A TRAIN ON HIS NEW RAILWAY

rapid outlet for the products of which this lovely country is full.

It is with regret that I must close this chapter on a Sovereign whom, I trust, it will enable my readers to understand and appreciate. At an age when many a Prince has thought only of enjoyment and the squandering of a fortune, Abbas Hilmi works without ceasing to make his, hand in hand with the development of his country. He gives to his people an excellent example of hard and intelligent work, and shows to them, whilst following it bravely himself, the road to power, wealth, and regeneration. The Khedive, by his character, his life, his conduct, has redeemed the follies of his grandfather Ismail, and the weaknesses of his father Tewfik. Egypt to-day possesses a Sovereign of which she has every reason to be proud.



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PALACES ON THE NILE

CHAPTER IX

THE KHEDIVIAL FAMILY

Prince Mohamed Ali—Prince Hussein—Prince Fuad—Prince-Poet Haidar—Impressions—Anecdotes—Her Highness Princess Nazli—Her Palace—Afternoon tea—Her opinion on men and affairs—Luncheon party—Discussions on society, politics, religion in presence of the late Grand Moufti—Personal souvenirs of her Highness.

YOUNG, smart and good looking, his Highness Prince Mohamed Ali, brother of the Khedive, is a man of charming manners, whose company is much sought after by his friends. Holding firmly to etiquette and the protocol in all that is official, he is simplicity itself in his private life.

In the garden of his huge Palace in the Place Soliman, the Prince awaited us one Sunday afternoon, when he had invited the United States Minister and myself to visit him. Coming towards us with outstretched hands, he said, smiling: "So sorry to receive you in such chaos, but I am leaving, I have sold my Palace. The whole charm of the place consisted to me in this delicious garden, with its high walls protecting one from prying eyes, at a time, it seems only yesterday, when this quarter was free from these huge buildings. But to-day,—look!" And the Prince pointed to the immense blocks of modern flats overlooking his garden.

"I am off," he said, "to build elsewhere, far from here, and in a few months' time this garden will be covered with houses. Confound this mania for building!" Then, leading

us into a small *salon* and offering us cigarettes, the Prince said, addressing me :

" I know that you have seen a great deal lately of my brother (the Khedive) ; I do not know what he has said to you, and his position obliges him to measure his words, but with me the case is different ; I have no reason for holding my tongue, and I don't mind telling you that we are living in sad times. Can you imagine a people, numbering twelve million souls, allowing themselves to be kept in leading strings by a handful of strangers, or who in business allow Greeks and Jews to amass all the wealth of the country ? It is shameful and it is sad."

This conversation, begun in English, was continued in French. The Prince speaks both these languages fluently, as well as German. His first studies were undertaken at Chateau de Lancy near Geneva, and continued at Vienna.

" The worst feature of the present situation," he remarked, " is that the English have treated us Egyptians with such contempt, that the people have now lost all respect for the educated, intelligent and leading classes of the country. Formerly the *tarbouche** was held in respect : to-day it is the foreign hat which is worshipped. The police, who are so brutal to the weaker classes, but who will lick the boots of the stronger, are paralysed at the sight of a hat, whilst they will not even salute a Prince or a Minister whose head is covered with a *tarbouthe*. I can tell you a little story about this. When the Duke of Connaught left Cairo, I went to the station to bid him good-bye. After the train had left, I stood for a few minutes chatting to one of my friends. I saw Lord Cromer leave, saluted by all the police ; but when, in my turn, I passed in front of them . . . not a salute. On the other hand, the crowd at the doors, who had received Cromer in silence, greeted me with cheers, but not a policeman saluted. I was accompanied by the Prime Minister, Moustapha Fehmy Pasha, by the Financial Adviser, Sir Vincent Corbett, and by the Chief of Police himself, Captain Mansfield. His men, who had saluted Cromer, refused to render the same salute to our *tarbouches*. I turned

* The national headdress of Egypt.

to Mansfield and said to him : 'I compliment you, your men do not even seem to know you ! ' "

" Prince," I said, " you do not seem to be particularly fond of the English ? "

" Well," he replied, " I can like them in their own homes, but not here. When I was in England I met many charming people, who treated me with perfect courtesy. It made me ask myself continually, can these people, with such charming manners and so well-bred, be the same brutes we have in Egypt ? Why are they so perfect at home and so ill-mannered with us ? And, take my word for it, they are making a great mistake. It is because of their bad manners that they are not liked. A little more consideration and politeness towards us Egyptians would gain for them many friendships and much devotion, but what we cannot stand is their boorishness, their lack of tact, and their coarseness."

The Prince is strong on the question of the respect due to the *tarbouche*, which is worn equally by the English officers in the service of Egypt, and he recounted many an amusing story about it. And it certainly seems as if there were a sad lack of good taste on the part of many of the English officers in Egypt, even amongst those occupying the highest posts.

Happening to speak of horses, he kindly offered to show us his, which are celebrated; and proceeding to the stables the Prince, a perfect horseman, put some of his favourites through their paces. Amongst these was a black, an Arab thoroughbred, which the Prince had taken with him on one of his trips to Paris. It was much admired there, and the Comtesse de Castellane begged the Prince to sell him, but in vain.

Riding is not the only accomplishment the Prince can boast of. He is also an excellent swordsman, musician and artist.

I have no idea here of giving the biographies of all the Princes of the Khedivial family, for they are many; but I should like to jot down a few impressions of those whom I have had the honour and pleasure of meeting. I must make an exception, however, in regard to one of the best loved and most popular, Prince Hussein Kamel Pasha, who, much to my regret, had quitted Cairo when I returned from the Sudan, and whom, therefore, I did not meet.

Dittrich

H.H. PRINCE MOHAMED ALI

Second son of Khedive Ismail, his Highness Prince Hussein was sent as a boy to France, where he was received as a friend by the Emperor Napoleon III. The Empress Eugénie treated him like a son. He became one of the fashionable set, and his father, having bought for him a superb house, he received his friends there with a grace and charm of which Paris still speaks. Brilliant, distinguished, every inch a Prince and generous to a fault, he was very popular at the Tuileries. On his return to Egypt he became Minister of War, a position which he occupied at the moment when the war with Abyssinia broke out. It was he who did wonders in organising in a very short space of time the army which left Egypt for Abyssinia, excellently equipped. His Highness was married in 1873 at the same time as his brothers Tewfik and Hassan; and it was on the occasion of this triple wedding that their father, the Khedive Ismail, gave the *fêtes* which have not to this day been forgotten.

Dittrich
H.H. PRINCE HUSSEIN KAMEL PASHA

The three marriages took place at a distance of one week from each other, being followed shortly after by a fourth, that of their sister, Princess Zenah Hanum, with Prince Ibrahim Achmet. The festivities lasted for a month. Wonderful processions, escorted by numerous regiments, wound their way through the town, exhibiting the presents. Special kiosques were erected in the gardens of the Palace, where huge dinner parties were given, whilst, in the Place du Palais, immense tents sheltered buffets, where night and day all comers were served with meats, cakes, ices, wines and liqueurs. No other city in the world has ever witnessed such feasting.

Considerably impoverished by the giving up by himself and his brothers of the property of their father in favour of his creditors, Prince Hussein lives to-day very quietly, looking after his estates, and taking the greatest interest in agricultural and horticultural questions.

His brother, Prince Fuad Pasha, was studying at Geneva in 1879, when recalled by his mother. When the exiled Khedive Ismail settled at Naples, Prince Fuad was admitted to the Military School in Turin, where he finished his education entering, as an officer, the Italian Artillery. For several years he was stationed at Rome, and was a *persona grata* with King Humbert, who treated him with the greatest affection, and was fond of talking with him in Piedmontese, a dialect with which the Prince is well acquainted. Wishing to be near his father, who had retired to Constantinople, he sent in his papers and took a commission in the Turkish army.

P. Dittrich

H.H. PRINCE FUAD PASHA

After having been some time Military Attaché at Vienna he retired, returning to Egypt to look after his estates. Cheery, hospitable, and a good friend, he is much liked and much sought after. He is everything which is Parisian, witty and amusing. In a drawing-room at Cairo two ladies were discussing their summer plans, when one of them said, "I think we shall pass it quite quietly at Enghien." Hardly had the last word left her lips before a stentorian voice at her back shouted, "Enghien, sixty trains a day!" It was the Prince, who knew the suburbs of his beloved Paris as well as the boulevards.

Meeting him one evening at a reception, I showed him, in

a quiet corner, certain photographs which I had brought with me from the Sudan. One of these happened to be of a Shilouk, a perfect giant, completely naked, and whose various members were of elephantine dimensions. The Prince seized it and, turning to the ladies with whom the room was filled, he cried, "Mesdames, look at this charming little Shilouk woman!" Immediately the ladies thronged around. The terrible photograph was passed from hand to hand, amidst exclamations and who knows what mental comparisons.

I have passed many very pleasant hours with her Highness Princess Nazli, aunt of the Khedive. A woman of great intellect, of large and liberal ideas, she speaks with a frankness rare amongst Orientals. Quite contrary to the general rule, Princess Nazli enjoys and, I believe, has always enjoyed, absolute liberty, receiving in her *salons* gentlemen as well as ladies. At Constantinople, at Cairo, and in the course of many wanderings through Europe, she has met the best known men and women of our time. In meeting with all these different intellects, that of the Princess has been developed, polished, and in a way moulded by contact with them. Being also a great reader and blessed with a retentive memory, there are very few subjects in the discussion of which she cannot take an intelligent part. I was rather astonished on my first visit, for example, to find out that, although the Princess had never been in Japan, she knew the country almost as well as I.

We took tea in the large *salon*, where the furniture, the tables and the walls are covered with photographs of relations, friends, Sovereigns, and celebrities, of whom the Princess, whilst smoking uninterruptedly cigarette after cigarette, spoke volubly, sometimes in English, sometimes in French.

"Tell me all you know of Oyama," she said to me, "for I have an intense admiration for him. . . . What a man! If only Egypt possessed a few of his kind we should not be where we are. But, sad as it is, we must recognise that in this unfortunate land of ours we possess no men worthy of the name. Without energy, without courage, without character, without initiative and without patriotism, there you have our Egyptians."

"But, Princess, that will change . . . the new generation. . . ." Her Highness stopped me:

"The new generation is not worth the rope to hang itself with. It thinks of nothing but the cut of its clothes, the shape of its boots, or the possession of a European girl for its mistress, who sucks them dry physically and morally, as well as emptying their purses. The influence which these women exercise over our youth is fantastic and deplorable. They ruin them in every way, and make of them nothing more nor less than human scarecrows.

"If," cried the Princess, "I were only a man, to be allowed to live my life in the fight for fame and fortune! My father, as you know, gave all his money to the poor. I have nothing therefore but the pension which the Government grants me. Believe me, I should like to work for that pension, and I pass my time in urging and encouraging our men, trying to make them a little more worthy of the name, but, alas! it is an ungrateful task, for they change and turn like weathercocks."

"Then, Princess, it is clear that the Egyptians are not yet fit to govern themselves?"

"Govern ourselves! but, my dear Sir, we are children still, babes in bibs, unable to stand. . . . No, no, we cannot be left alone. Here Cromer does everything, everything. Without him we should have to return to the guardianship of the Powers. Cromer is a great man, and Egypt owes him everything, but in the last two years he has become too lenient, too kind. I should like to see him smother all these speculators, to-day who are the plague of Egypt. In all the capitals of Europe there is a huge building on which is written 'Stock Exchange.' Here the whole country is one vast Stock Exchange, which saps its civilisation at the roots."

From time to time a woman entered, bringing Turkish coffee, and I asked the Princess if her servants of to-day were her old slaves.

"For us, there is no difference," she replied; "we treated our slaves like children, they were part of our life. It was our duty to care for them well, to clothe them, to show them kindness and affection. They lacked nothing, and often made good marriages, when we gave them their trousseaux. If they were

not happy, they could always return and find a home with us, where they found protection. Not a man would have dared to harm them, either they had to marry them or leave them alone. Now any man, no matter who, although he might despise them even to the extent of refusing to drink a glass of water from their hands, can seduce and abandon them. That comes of civilisation badly applied. The result most in evidence of the abolition of slavery is the making of thousands of prostitutes. These girls, once happy with us, now drag out a miserable existence in the gutter."

Lekegian

H.H. PRINCESS NAZLI

Rising, the Princess showed me excellent photographs of Bismarck, Kitchener and Li-Hung-Chang, all with the most flattering dedications.

"Are you fond of music?" asked her Highness, as she seated herself at a Pianola attached to a Steinway grand.

"I play for hours on this marvellous instrument. I should like to see one in every family, to teach them the love of music and harmony."

Twilight was falling, but the Princess continued to play piece after piece, keeping up a running commentary of remarks and recollections:

"Ah! this is the National Anthem of Russia. How exquisite, but how sad! . . . My mother was Russian, yet I

detest them like poison. . . . I remember an old sheik, it was at the time of the Russo-Turkish War, who predicted that the Russians would not be beaten by the Turks, but crushed by a yellow people."

Then came "God Save the Queen," and the Princess continued:

"That brings back to me a great emotion; I was in London at the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, when I heard it sung by an immense crowd. It was superb and heart-wringing, coming from these thousands of throats, and I confess I wept. . . . I shall never forget it, never!"

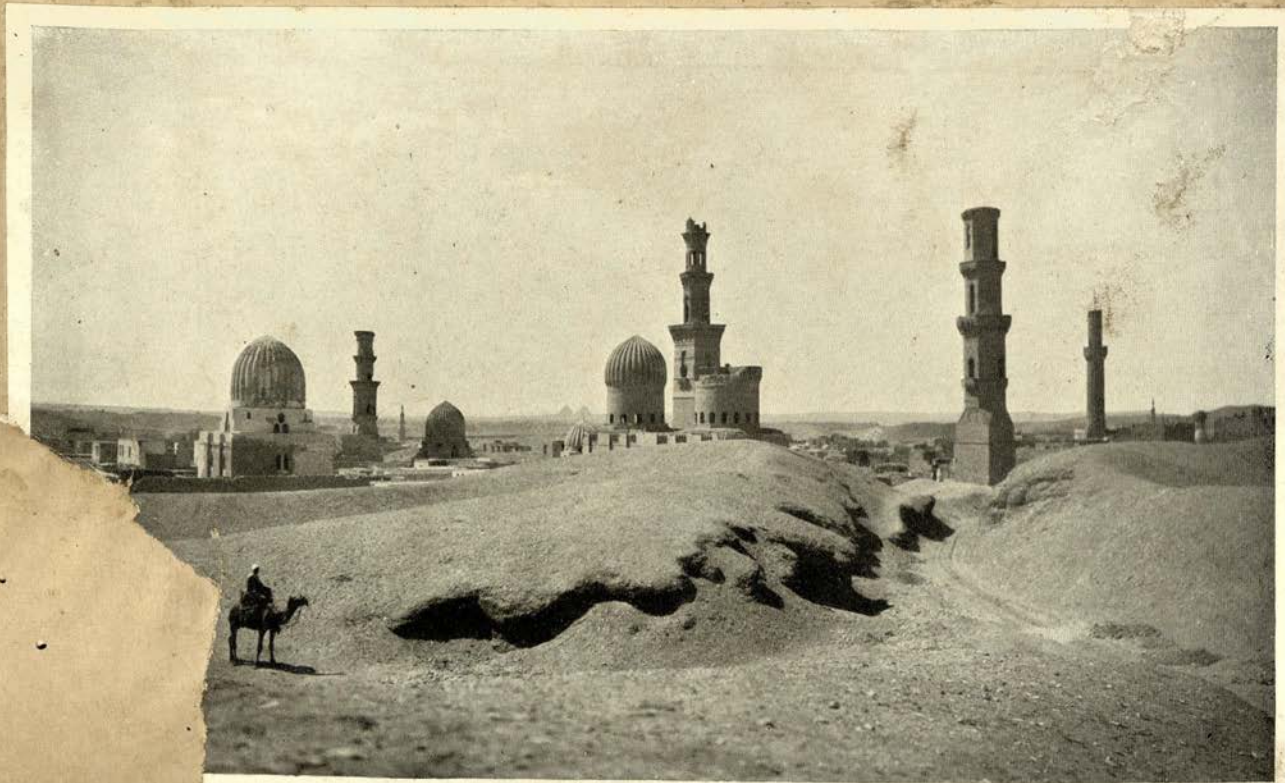
The women entered, and the lamps were lit. The Princess quitted the piano, and resuming her cigarettes exclaimed:

"Listen to me, you Christians, you do not understand us Mussulmans. You ignore all there is that is good, beautiful, noble, and generous in our religion. It is our past rulers who have ruined Islam. With Princes more enlightened and more energetic Turkey would to-day have been at the head of the nations. . . . It is not the people who are bad but their leaders, their Sovereigns."

The last word seemed to suggest something to her Highness, and, laughing, she continued:

"I have never been able to understand the love you Europeans have for Royal personages. In the hands of a King or an Emperor you are as clay in the hands of the potter. When Sir Z. X., the celebrated English diplomatist, passed through Constantinople once, he whispered terrible things to me against the Sultan. I replied, 'Wait until you have seen him and spoken with him, and your opinion will soon change.' 'Never!' he cried; but a few days later, when we happened to meet at dinner on the day he had had his first audience, he could not say enough in praise of the Sovereign who, only a short time previously, he had professed to scorn."

I could fill a volume with the thousand-and-one anecdotes related by the Princess, but here space will not permit. I shall content myself with a note on a lunch to which her Highness invited me together with her brother, M. and Mdme. Hussein



TOMBS OF THE MAMELUKES

David Gardiner

Rouchdy Bey, the late Grand Moufti of Egypt, Prince Haidar, the well-known poet, and several others.

I was seated between her Highness and the Grand Moufti, who had opposite him Prince Haidar, and it would have been difficult to find a greater contrast than that presented by these two men: the first small, simple, calm, and gentle; the second stout, strong, with an enormous head set on enormous shoulders, noisy and excitable: the one expressing his thoughts clearly in a few words, the other using extravagant language, speaking of sun and moon, flowers and stars, as becomes a poet. The Prince possesses a huge mouth, out of which, stretched to its utmost, comes a laugh like a peal of thunder, making the wall shake. He is a great talker, and, I must admit, an interesting one:

"I hate," he said, "your colonising people. I consider it a sin to penetrate into these countries, turning them upside down and bothering the wretched inhabitants, all in the name of civilisation. What can England boast of? Of being a nation of shopkeepers, of manufacturers and colonisers? Yes, but don't look to them for art, science, or enlightenment!"

"Well, Prince," some one cried, "one cannot find much of that in Egypt either."

"Certainly not; I admit that, for we have fallen into the gutter, where we lie and wallow. We have no more patriotism, no more anything. For five years I have looked for a spark, one only, to show that we were alive, but, alas, not one have I seen."

Prince Haidar has a horror of the clergy, and he cried:

"They represent not religion but all the baseness, all the weakness, all the deceptions. . . ."

"All the hypocrisies," a voice added sweetly. It was the Grand Moufti.

The Prince drew him into our conversation, and led up to the question of education, which the Grand Moufti wished to see made general throughout the country; but Princess Nazli would have none of it. "I much prefer the old system. Let the son of a coachman be a coachman, and the son of a butcher be a butcher. Where shall we get our servants from when every one has a certificate?"

Love was a subject which appealed to the poet-Prince. "I know of a writer," he said, "who had his mistress slung up by the armpits so that he might cover her feet with kisses in the intervals of composing."

"And that reminds me," said the Princess, "of the old Minister for War in Turkey, X. Pasha, before whom the army trembled, but who was insanely in love with a certain fair lady, whose feet he kissed saying, 'Madam, I, who have the army at my feet, am content to grovel at yours.'"

In the midst of the buzz of conversation, the servants continued to hand round an extraordinary number of Eastern dishes, very well cooked, but too rich for my taste.

"This dish which is being served is a historic one," said the Princess, "dating from the time of Noah. When the water was disappearing, and the Ark had at last touched earth, Father Noah planted corn, and when it was green he took it and made of it a cream into which he put almonds, raisins, and lots of other things which he had brought with him. The recipe for this celebrated dish was handed down by Noah to future generations, and ever since, through all the centuries, it has been the custom in Egypt to send enormous platefuls from one family to another."

In the intervals between the courses, the guests, with a practised dig of the fork, extracted, in true Turkish fashion, a *hors d'œuvre* from one of the many dishes on the table.

Some time after this lunch, I had occasion to travel from Cairo to Alexandria in the compartment reserved for Prince Haidar, who happened to be travelling at the time, and invited me to accompany him. The Prince, who wields a dainty pen as a poet, recited several charming little poems of his own, which he promised to send me. I should have liked to publish them here, but, alas, they have never arrived!

In his carriage the Prince was surrounded by many volumes, the masterpieces of French literature. His greatest pleasure is to dip into these pages, written, as he says, in "the most beautiful language in the world."

Drawing my attention to the beauties of the country, he spoke of the fellaheen, those patient tillers of the soil.

"These unfortunate people," he said, "who for centuries

have lived in oppression, cannot be expected to revive in a day. But, for the last fifteen years, a great change has been working in them, and to-day there are signs of an awakening intelligence where, before, they appeared as so many beasts of burden. No longer oppressed, they are beginning to raise their heads, and they have now arrived at the point when they are asking with surprise, in seeing the dawn of a new era, Is it possible ? I believe that in time, a long time, one will at last obtain 'men,' but a long course of education will be required to develop their feeble intellects. What a magnificent work for some Minister of Public Instruction, who understands his power ! "

For the first time, I believe, in the history of Egypt a foreign lady has made part of the Khedivial family. In fact, his Highness Prince Ali Fazil, cousin of the Khedive, married, some few years ago, a young Frenchwoman, the step-daughter of M. Raphael Suarès, the Cairo banker. This unprecedented event encountered a certain amount of opposition in the Khedivial family; but, thanks to her intelligence and her personal charm, Princess Fazil has captured the hearts of many of her relatives-in-law, including the Khedive, who fully appreciates all her qualities.

Al Vista

NATIVE VILLAGE

CHAPTER X

HAREMS AND THE WOMAN IN EGYPT

The woman in Egypt—The harems—Europe's ideas of them—The real Mussulman home—Morality—Marriage and concubinage—Adultery and divorce—Past and present—Classes and races—Our ideas and theirs.

A HAREM! There was a time in my life when this simple word raised in my mind, as in that of most men ignorant of the East, visions of mysterious beauties and delicious joys. As in a dream I pictured to myself magnificent palaces, marble courts, chambers on whose floors were spread soft thick carpets, brilliant curtains, and huge divans on which reclined, some unrobed, others clad in fairy gauze, women of the most exquisite form and tempting beauty. In my ears was the splashing of cool fountains. I inhaled the perfume of attar of roses mixed with that of the perfumed cigarette, and I envied these Pashas who passed their days in the midst of such a paradise.

Alas! my imagination since these days has received many shocks. The first was received some years ago when, searching for some reference in regard to Egypt in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, my eyes fell on this passage:

"These women had immense shoulders, deep abdominal lines and enormous masses of fat on the hips and thighs; long

hair covered the lower part of the face, as well as the greater part of the body."

This dainty description of the first inhabitants of the Valley of the Nile some seven thousand years before our time left me pensive. The *Encyclopædia* had certainly the grace to add that this extraordinary type of person disappeared completely, giving place to a creature more approaching the European. But my visions were ruined. In the atmosphere of attar of roses, of the regular fall of the waters of the fountains, on those soft sofas covered with silken cushions, the apparition would arise of enormous females, rolling in fat and covered with long hair.

Lekegian

AN EGYPTIAN GIRL

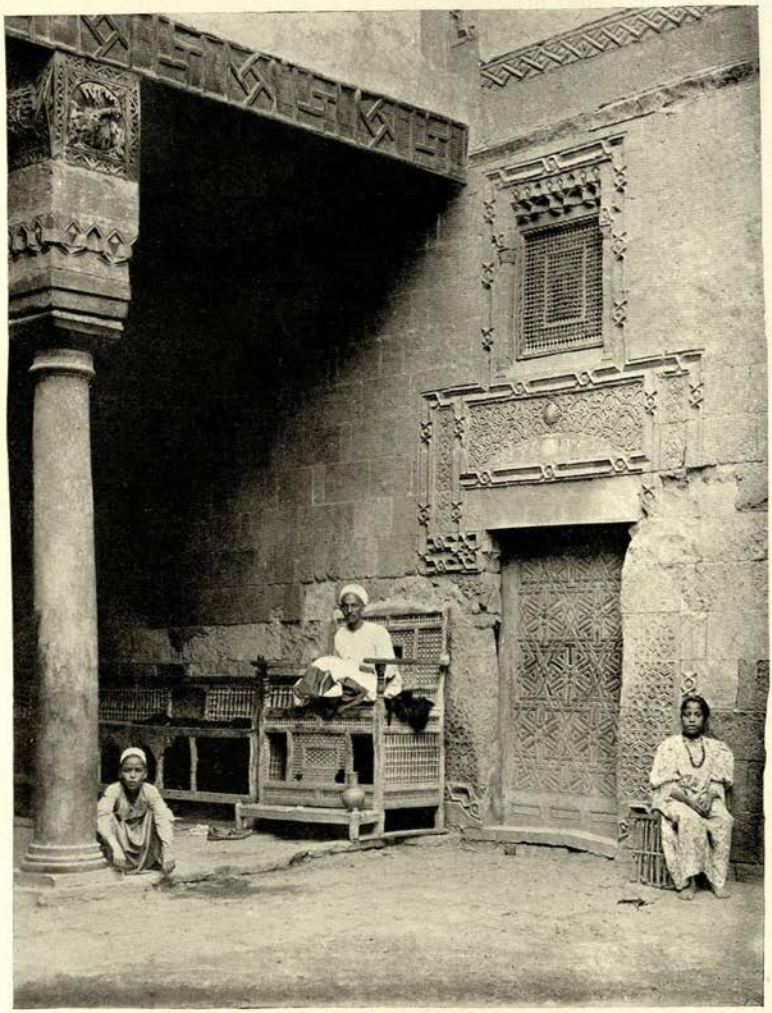
In Egypt, where everything is complicated, there is, perhaps, no question more difficult to understand than the position of woman. In the first place, the Egyptian's manner of seeing and of thinking is entirely different from ours, and, besides, woman and the harem are two subjects which he never cares to discuss with a stranger. That which concerns his family life is essentially private, mysterious, in a way sacred, and no one but he has a right to view it. On the other hand, it is impossible to generalise in speaking, I will not say of the Egyptian woman, but of the woman who lives in Egypt. The only true Egyptian women are the peasant women, wives of the fellaheen, as the fellaheen are the only real Egyptians. Of the life of the latter, poor creature who works like a beast of burden, and brings up a numerous offspring, there is little to say, and she is so far removed from us and our civilisation

that the subject would lack all interest for the majority of readers.

If we take Cairo as our field of study, or rather of our remarks and impressions, we find there various elements considered rightly or wrongly as Egyptian. There are, first of all, numerous families of Greek, Austrian, or Italian origin; Catholics, Jews, of the Greek Church, settled for many generations on the banks of the Nile, and who, though without a drop of Arab or Turkish blood in their veins, are none the less considered as natives, though their tastes, manners, and ways of living are altogether European. Of them also there is nothing special to be said.

There remains then the element essentially native. Now, in regard to this, more than in any other country, it is necessary to make distinctions. At the top of the social scale we find the Princesses of the Khedivial House, or allied to it by ties more or less close. If the time is not yet long passed when these Princesses lived in the seclusion of the harem, and if there are some amongst them who do so still, nevertheless is it true that the majority are quite emancipated. Many of them travel regularly in Europe, speak other languages than their own, surround themselves with all the comforts and conveniences of the West, and for them our civilisation has no secrets. It is therefore amongst the people and in the large class corresponding to our middle-class that we find women whose lives differ entirely from those of ours. The vital differences are found in the seclusion in which they live, the ignorance in which they are kept, the insecurity of the marriage tie, and their position of absolute inferiority in regard to man. One day, lunching at Montazah with the Khedive and speaking of the condition of women in Mussulman countries, his Highness said:

"It is generally believed in Europe that it is our religion which enjoins the women to veil themselves and to live in retirement; but that is an error, and religion has nothing whatever to do with it. It is an ancient custom, and dating from the time, far distant, when each man in the East had to defend his property, and especially his wives and his daughters. The more beautiful and attractive these were the more was it necessary that their beauty should be hidden."



Lekegian

ENTRANCE TO AN OLD NATIVE HOUSE

"Sir," I asked, "this custom which you have set aside of having several legitimate wives* and numerous concubines and slaves,† is it still general in Egypt?"

"No," he replied; "and you will find, especially in the upper and middle classes, that the custom of having several wives is disappearing rapidly. The principal reasons of this change are, first of all, the abolition of slavery, which makes it more difficult to obtain wives, and, secondly, the enormous increase in the cost of living. Several wives mean several different establishments; and as our religion insists on each one being treated with equal generosity, the expenses are naturally very great, and, as you know, the price of living and lodging has risen within the last few years in an incredible fashion. To-day it takes ten times the amount formerly required to live in the same fashion."

"In a word, Sir, it is economy and not virtue that has led to the change?"

"How you talk!" cried his Highness. "Virtue? but, my dear fellow, we must first of all define virtue. Tell me, how many married men do you know in Europe or America who are faithful to their wives in every acceptation of the word, and who never deceive them?

"The religion which permits a man to have several wives, whom he must treat with the same kindness, puts an end to a very bad side of monogamy, a system which drives many a man to become a libertine, seeking for pleasure which he can only find in the dangerous vice which he purchases, or in criminal adultery.

"Only," added his Highness laughing, "it is certain that having several wives has its little inconveniences. If one man sometimes finds it difficult to satisfy one, what would he do with three or four?"

"And as many mothers-in-law into the bargain!"

On the same subject, his Highness Prince Mahomed Ali once remarked to me:

* The Mussulman is permitted by his religion to have four legitimate wives, but the number of concubines is not limited.

† H.H. Abbas Hilmi, up to date in all things, has only one wife, H.H. the Khedivah, mother of his children.

"Our law does not oblige a woman to veil herself, but it does say, 'If thy beauty cause strife amongst men, inspiring them with love or jealousy in others, then were it better for thee that it should be hid.'"

If this law were taken literally, beautiful women alone would veil themselves, whilst those not so highly favoured would expose their lack of it to the world; but by the grace of God, there never yet was a woman who believed herself really ugly, the result of which is that the yellow and wrinkled faces of the veriest old hags are still shrouded in veils. The thickness seems to vary with the social standing of the wearer. Whilst the woman one meets on foot in the street has an impenetrable veil hiding the lower part of the face, those whom one sees passing rapidly in a smart brougham or landau wear only the lightest white gauze, which in no way hides their features.

VEILED WOMAN

Religion or custom as the case may be, the fact remains that for many centuries the Mussulman woman has lived the life of a recluse behind the iron gratings of the harem, to which came only a faint echo of the world outside, its progress, its struggles and its civilisation. Seeing only her women, her children, the eunuchs, and now and then her lord and master, her intellect remained childish and undeveloped. Her sole amusements came from outside, from the women, more or less degraded, who, under the guise of fortune tellers, dancers, singers, or story-tellers, brought to the harem scandals, cancans, superstitions, suggestive dances and lewd tales.

Naturally women living in such an atmosphere and ignorant of any other life are mentally much inferior to their husbands, who cannot find in them any mental or moral stimulus, and who therefore seek the company of their fellow men or Euro-

pean women. It is by their brain power and intellect, far more than by their bodily beauty, that foreign women, even ignorant and vulgar, attract Mussulmans so strongly or, perhaps to be more correct, it is the happy mixture of both.

Now that we have spoken briefly of the women, let us glance at the harem. The word is a Turkish one meaning "woman," but, in a wider sense, the family and the fireside, in fact, the home. A Mussulman's house is divided into two parts: the "harem' lik" and the "salem' lik." The first is the private dwelling, sacred in a way to the wife, the children and the eunuchs, these calm, inoffensive, devoted, and useful beings. No man is admitted here except the master of the house, who uses the other part, or "salem' lik," to receive his friends. This division exists amongst all classes, and even in the case of the very poor who possess but one room, that room is considered the "harem' lik": the head of the family will give *rendezvous* or invite his friends to meet him at a *café*.

One sees then that, speaking generally, the word "harem" has not, for the Mussulman, the signification usually attached to it by Europeans. Two things, I believe, have contributed to that reputation for gaiety, little merited. Firstly, to a monogamist, accustomed to see his one wife move about in every one's sight, these houses, locked and guarded, in which a single man possessed several wives, many concubines and slaves, appeared to him as so many mysterious Edens. Then again the harems of certain wealthy Mussulmans were formerly kept up on the most extravagant scale, and echoes of the *fêtes* that took place within reached the outer world, not lessened but much exaggerated in the coming. But the pashas who possessed hundreds of concubines and slaves, dozens of musicians and singers, a *corps de ballet*, and artists attached to their households, were very rare. Still they did exist, and the rumours of their orgies, far away in the mysterious East, were well calculated to inflame the popular imagination.

Some days after my arrival in Cairo I lunched with a foreign doctor, a well-known man, who has passed the last quarter of a century in the country, and who, talking of harems, said:

"We foreign physicians are the only men admitted. We

are allowed to enter alone the chamber of a woman who is suffering, whilst a native practitioner would not be admitted except in the presence of the eunuchs."

"Which looks, my dear doctor," I said, "as if you and your *confrères* had a great reputation either for virtue or indifference."

"No virtue is necessary," he replied, "and indifference is natural. You see, the temptation is nil. The Egyptian woman as we see her, without her garments, is to us Europeans far from attractive. There is not one good-looking one in a thousand, and, besides, they live in a state of incredible filth. I do not remember having seen the bed of a single woman which did not swarm with vermin."

I repeated this conversation one day to the Comtesse della Sala, widow of one of the most devoted servants of Khedive Tewfik, a woman of strong character and bound by many ties of friendship to the greatest Egyptian ladies.

"It is a horrible calumny," she cried. "All the young women I know, Princesses or otherwise, are daintiness and refinement personified. They take the greatest care of their persons, and as to their houses, with the exception of a certain untidiness very oriental, they are perfectly clean and well kept. I should very much like to know what class of woman your doctor is in the habit of visiting. Believe me, the Egyptian lady of good family does not cede a point to those of any other country, and some of those I know are the quintessence of elegance."

To my mind one of the most extraordinary features about these Egyptian ladies is, that after living a perfectly free and unrestrained life at Carlsbad, Lucerne, or Paris, they will, immediately on their return to Cairo, take up their old life of seclusion. Is it the fear of being criticised by the old-fashioned Mussulmans, or not to give to those to whom freedom is denied a sight of their liberty?

A certain person who knows Egypt thoroughly spoke to me thus:

"It would be impossible to give at once complete liberty to all our women. For centuries they have lived apart, knowing nothing of life, without the necessity of defending themselves or even of thinking for themselves: if you granted

them their freedom they would become the prey of the first man who cared to abuse their weakness.

"The slaves, happy and petted by their mistresses, conducted themselves well; the day the door was opened to them they became prostitutes, not because they were vicious but because they did not know how to look after themselves. If you did the same for their mistresses the result would be similar."

It seems certain that the woman in Egypt is passing at this moment through a period of transition, both critical and dangerous. I know that his Highness the Khedive and other intelligent Egyptians recognise the backward condition of the Egyptian woman, but they are convinced that the moment has not yet come to emancipate her completely and absolutely, and that in such a delicate matter it is necessary to proceed slowly and with the greatest prudence.

I read on my return from Cairo a very interesting book, whose author, Niya Salima (Mdme. Rouchdy), had kindly forwarded to me. Married to an Egyptian occupying an important official position, and highly connected, she has the *entrée* to the best houses, and her volume, "Harems et Musulmanes d'Egypte," gives an excellent idea of the condition of women in the valley of the Nile at the present time. There are many interesting things in these pages; but, though I do not know quite why, the thing which struck me most was the declaration that such a thing as an "old maid" is unknown; that, no matter how ugly or repulsive a woman may be, she need never lack a husband, even though she may be without fortune. It is true that the state of connubial bliss may be only an ephemeral one. The Egyptian loves a change: he flits like a bee from flower to flower, and the ease with which he can obtain a divorce admirably suits his tastes and temperaments. Should one of his wives displease him, he has only to repudiate her, and if he wishes to make an end of things, the repudiation becomes final on his repeating three times, "Thou art divorced!" That is all, and, as one can see, the method is simple and convenient. If all divorces are not settled quite so rapidly it may be because of the fact that, when thus pronounced by the husband, he must return the money which his

wife brought him, and pay her a pension for three months, or, in case of her being *enceinte*, until the weaning of the child. Many men of the less respectable kind, in order to evade these expenses, in lieu of repudiating the wife, make her life so unbearable that the wretched creature seeks the separation herself. First she will apply to the Cadi, or religious judge, who will try to bring about a reconciliation; but after his sermon the bad treatment becoming worse and worse, she is forced to fly, leaving her goods behind her. Her widowhood probably will be of very short duration, and she will soon pass into the service of some other man.

The precepts of the Koran concerning repudiation and divorce are interesting and edifying, and will be found scattered here and there throughout the book of Niya Salima. I shall content myself with quoting a few passages, from which we learn that:

"Repudiation may take place twice, after which, if the wife be kept, she must be treated honestly, or, if sent away, treated generously."

"If a husband repudiate his wife thrice, he is not permitted to take her back until after she shall have married another man, who in his turn has repudiated her."

It is true that in every case the wife repudiated must "allow three months to elapse before remarrying, for they must not hide that which God may have created within them."

But the good and just Prophet commands, "That the rich man shall give according to his riches, and the man who has only what he requires according to that which God has given him."

Just as in Paris the middle-class wedding-parties drive in processions of rickety landaus for a turn in the "Bois," so the Egyptian trails through the town a long train of musicians, camels, cars and impossible carriages. But the *fêtes* given on the occasion of a wedding are much longer, more important, and more complicated than with us, except in the case of a widow or *divorcée*. One would require a volume to describe all the quaint ceremonies, the feasts, receptions and *fêtes* of all kinds.

I transcribe from the book I have mentioned the following passage descriptive of a great feast :

" Little is said . . . hunger is too pressing. Not a sound of a dish : fingers take the place of forks, and each one dips into the middle of the bowl. . . . A pretty little hand shining with butter meets another sticky with sugar in a dish filled with an atrocious mixture called ' tourchis.' . . . Every one munches noisily, quite at his ease ; for is one not at home, and it is only due to the Creator to enjoy the good things He has sent us, without fuss. . . . Each one leaves the table when he wishes, and makes his way towards the copper basin at the end of the table. Ablutions, casual before dinner, are now made complete. Standing there, ewer in hand, the servant pours into the palms of the hands a stream of clear water. The lather of the soap covers the hands, and finally finds its way to the mouth by means of the index finger, serving as an impromptu tooth-brush. Then come gurglings and garglings, highly hygienic no doubt, but rather inconsiderate . . . all the room is full of them."

MOTHER AND CHILD

These gurglings after dinner are known in other civilised countries, and the *rince-bouche*, once upon a time popular in France and elsewhere, was, in my humble opinion, much more disgusting.

At Cairo the guests leave the table and gargle at the other end of the room ; not as with us, when, not so very long ago either, the performance took place at table and in unison.

It seems almost incredible to us that a young man should marry a girl on whom he has never set eyes, and yet that is what happens at this moment in Egypt. The following lines of

Niya Salima give an excellent idea of the end of the marriage rites, which sometimes last an entire week.

"The husband, escorted from the Mosque by friends of his own age, with lighted torches, music, and uproar, is at last announced. The young bride descends from the platform, and supported by two matrons, veiled and trembling, awaits the conclusion of the final rites. The eunuchs appear followed by the bridegroom, blind with confusion, who walks nervously towards the praying carpet prepared for him, and there prostrates himself. When he has thus publicly made his devotions he approaches the bride, and, raising her veil, looks at her. On her breast he pins with his own hands a jewel, and as she lifts his hand to her lips he kisses her on the forehead: then he throws a handful of gold to the matrons, who promptly vanish. Ascending the steps of the throne they seat themselves for a moment, and at last enter together the nuptial chamber, where the bride commences the duties of her new life by giving her husband something to drink.

"How does this first interview pass, and with what strange sensations do these two so unexpectedly united regard one another? Curious folk might wish to know, but the doors are jealously guarded, until proof is given to the anxious parents that all is well."

As to the happiness of the couple, that depends, it seems, on many things. I shall mention only two: the first, which impels the mother of the bride to place in the nuptial bed a pair of scissors, a means of ensuring the love of the bridegroom; the second, which recommends that the young wife, if she desires that "the grey mare should be the better horse," must place her foot on that of her husband and *spit* into the glass of sirop which she offers him!

I have already mentioned that the authorities most competent to judge are opposed to the idea of emancipating too rapidly the women of Egypt. I know equally that Lord Cromer is of opinion that the Egyptians will never attain the mental and moral development which he desires for them, so long as their women remain the ignorant and childish creatures which they are. In spite of this decided conviction,

which he has himself mentioned to me, Lord Cromer advises deliberation and prudence.

In his last report he recalls to the reformers the old Arab proverb, "Speed is of the devil, Slowness of God," and his opinion is that rushing matters might lead to a veritable cataclysm.

There is no doubt that the entire country is beginning to

Dittrich

ARAB MANSION

understand the necessity of educating its women folk. The best proof of this is the increasing number of young girls being sent to the schools. Almost nil a few years ago, there were in 1900, 2050; four years later, that is last year, the number had increased to 10,462.

I have paid a visit at Cairo to the elementary school for girls, presided over by Mrs. Johnston, a woman of strong character and keen sympathy. I was charmed with the place, bright and sunny, and with the hundred little things by which a woman can transform a bare school-house into a real home. The subjects of study are well chosen and practical, but the difficulty is to retain the scholars after the age of thirteen or

fourteen years, as then they are almost women, and the parents are already planning their marriage.

Although the Mussulman may consider a woman as an inferior being, he, none the less, is capable of the great passion. As in all other lands, the weaker sex has inspired the poets of the valley of the Nile, and above all the Arabs, these *grands amoureux*.

M. Ferdinand de Martino Bey has published a very interesting volume, entitled "Anthologie de l'Amour Arabe," in which I have found some delicious little poems, not to speak of others well calculated to alarm Mrs. Grundy. The author declares that the Arab is a great wit, and certainly many of the amusing stories which he rattled off gave good reason for his opinion.

Sanderson

A MUMMY

CHAPTER XI

EDUCATION AND RELIGION

The rising generation—Education—The schools—Religion—The Grand Moufti of Egypt and the University—Lord Cromer's opinions—The Arab University—Technical schools—School of Medicine—School of Police—Reformatory—The hospitals—Works of charity.

THE POLITICAL TESTAMENT OF THE LATE GRAND MOUFTI*

". . . Since your departure I have been so unwell that the doctors prohibited me from all work. During the last two days I have felt somewhat better, so I take the opportunity of this momentary respite to send you these few lines as promised.

". . . I intend sailing for Marseilles on the 14th inst. . . . I hope I shall have the strength and time to come and see you. We can then have a talk at our leisure on the subjects on which you have asked me for information."

ALAS, the Grand Moufti of Egypt, Sheik Mohamed Abdou, who wrote the above on June 6 last, had neither the time nor the strength to carry out his intentions. Death claimed him, whilst still a young man, five weeks later. His physician, the celebrated Dr. Comanos Pasha, forbade him to leave, "for he would have died on the journey," as he wrote me in a letter announcing the end of the celebrated Sheik, adding, "He was the greatest man in modern Mussulman Egypt."

At Cairo I had several important conversations with the Grand Moufti on religious and educational questions. On

* Grand Moufti, *i.e.*, Chief of the Laws of Islam, Patriarch of the Mussulmans.

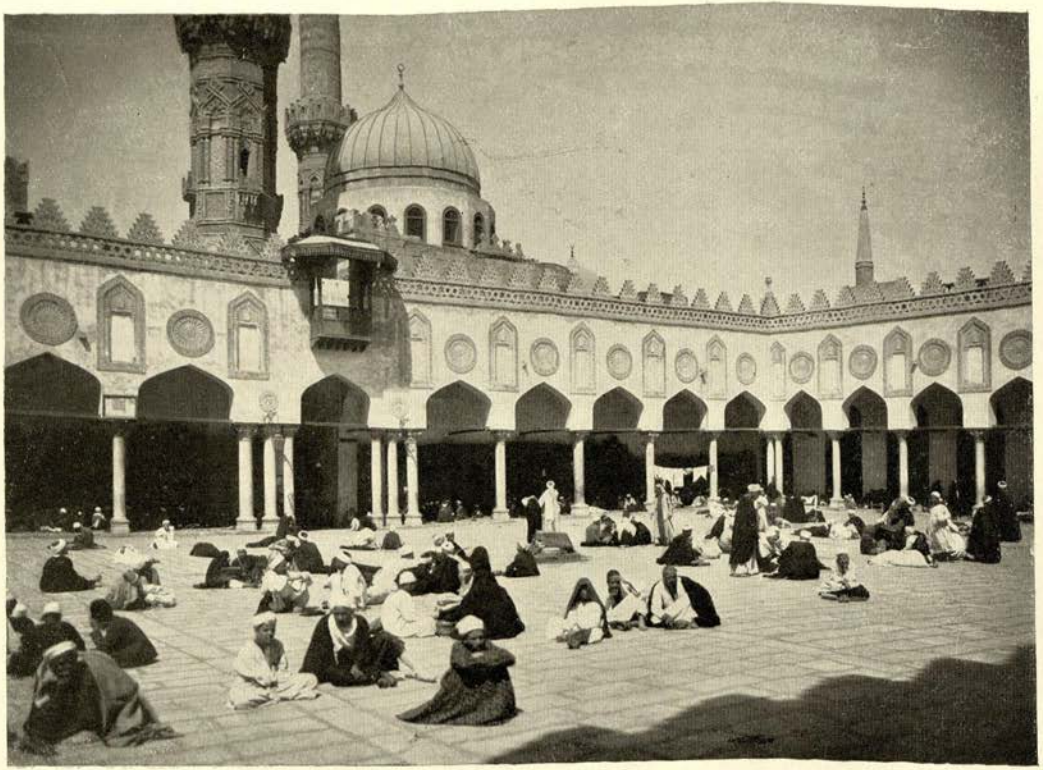
the eve of my departure he came to see me, and promised to send me a note on each of these subjects. The first, of which he speaks in his letter, has in fact reached me, and is probably the last piece of work which he did, with the exception of a beautiful poem, which, I have learned, he dictated on his death-bed before rendering up his soul to God.

I had promised the Sheik that in making use of any notes which he might send me I should not divulge the source from which they came, doubtless to avoid any unpleasantness with the Government. Now that he is no more, and that this important document is in my hands, I feel that I am right in publishing, just as it came to me, what may be considered as a last appeal, a clause, as it were, in the political will and testament of this good man, who had so thoroughly at heart the welfare of his country.

The following are his words :

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

"The Egyptian Government spends annually on Public Education the sum of £200,000 at a time when its Budget, amounting to over £12,000,000, would allow of its disbursing a larger amount. From time to time it raises the sum which each family must pay for the instruction of its children ; and that in such a continuous fashion and in such proportions that the education of the children becomes an expense too crushing even for the middle class of the nation. If this increase continues, education will become a luxury within the reach of only the wealthy families. It is a principle with those directing our affairs that the children of the poor have no right to be instructed. This principle they loudly proclaim. In their conversation, in their reports, in their books, one finds it everywhere. One can admit that up to a certain point the father of a family who sets aside a part of his income for the education of his children will see that he gets value for his money ; he will see that his children should profit by the instruction which costs him so dear. But to pretend from this that all free education is useless is inadmissible and is refuted by experience.



David Gardiner

EL AZHAR UNIVERSITY

It should be observed, in fact, that from the time of Mohamed Ali up to the year 1882, entrance into the Egyptian schools was almost always free. That has not prevented those schools from producing a certain number of men really well educated, and who belonged for the most part to the poorest class of the people. In Europe education is free in many countries which do not do badly. But what is the experience of the past and the example of Europe when one has made up one's mind to have one's own way?

Fasani

THE LATE GRAND MOUFTI

"It is pitiful to see, each year, the spectacle of fathers and mothers of families bringing their little boys to the Ministry for Education, asking as a favour that they may be accepted free, invoking their poverty, and often the services rendered to the State by one or several of their family, hoping always that Providence or pity will relax the rules for once, but obliged ultimately to return to their houses or to their villages deceived, disheartened, discontented, not knowing what to do with these little children for whom they had dreamed so many things. What should be done? We are told, we have rich fellow-countrymen who could well afford to erect free schools for the poor. Certainly, our rich compatriots could do that and more. But Egypt does not yet possess philanthropists, and above all enlightened philanthropists. There are those who sometimes build mosques of which we have no need, considering the already excessive number which we possess: there are others who leave part of their fortune to a saint, but private initiative has not yet turned towards education. Our people have too long looked to the community in everything and for everything.

"If we consider now the instruction given by the Egyptian Government from the point of view of its worth, we are obliged to state that it hardly enables a man to acquire the means for earning a living wage. It is impossible that it could turn out, not a genius, but a scholar, a writer or a philosopher. The only schools which represent higher education in Egypt are the Schools of Law and Medicine, and the Polytechnic. Of all the other sciences of which human knowledge is composed, the Egyptian may sometimes obtain a superficial notion at the preparatory schools, but it is almost impossible for him to study them thoroughly, and often he is compelled to ignore them. For example: Social Economy, with its branches, historical, moral and economical; Philosophy, ancient and modern; Literature, Arabic and European, and the Fine Arts are not taught in Egypt in any school.

Dittrich

MOSQUE EL AZHAR

"The result is that we possess judges and lawyers, physicians and engineers more or less capable of exercising their professions; but amongst the educated classes one looks in vain for the investigator, the thinker, the philosopher, the scholar, the man in fact of open mind, fine spirit, generous sentiments, whose whole life is found devoted to the ideal.

"To sum up, the line of conduct which the State has mapped out for itself and which it seems resolved to adhere to is this: (1) To encourage summary education in the small

schools called Kouttab, where the child is taught to read and write, and learns the four rules of arithmetic. (2) To spread education as little as possible amongst the people. (3) To reduce secondary and higher education to the smallest limit. Egyptians are persuaded that those who direct their public affairs are not doing all they can to raise the moral and intellectual level of the rising generation. This opinion is deplorable from every point of view; it will create, sooner or later, a current of discontent in public opinion. We cannot see what the English will gain by allowing such a conviction to continue in the minds of the inhabitants. If there is a common standpoint on which we might meet it is Public Education. Between the interests of the English and the interests of the Egyptians there can be no difference. To develop Egypt it is necessary that every force should be employed, and especially *man*, above all *man*. For that, the combined work of Europeans and natives is necessary. In weakening, reducing, and mentally impoverishing the natives, the English are acting against their own interests. It is to their advantage that the Egyptians should become powerful, free and rich; their own prosperity and their own wealth depend on ours.

ADMINISTRATION AND JUSTICE.

"The Egyptian Administration has no need of great reforms in its organisation. Nevertheless, it leaves much to be desired. Its principal fault lies in the unsatisfactory choice of its officials. As a rule one thing alone is exacted in a candidate, and that is that he should possess a nature entirely passive. A man in the smallest degree independent will not be admitted, or if by mistake he should be, he will not remain long. Why is it so? Simply because the English mistrust too much, and without reason, men of independent thought. They find officials ready to do all that is asked of them, and even more if by doing so they can gain favour with their superiors. And they seem to be satisfied with this condition of things. Unfortunately, the result is that those in charge of our affairs are seldom well informed on the men and affairs of the Administration. The Egyptian officials dare not tell them the

truth, they take no initiative, approve all that is wanted, and never oppose any measure. One example from a thousand :

"An Egyptian moudir in a province is assisted by an English inspector. Normally the moudir should administer, and the inspector control his work. But it is not so. The moudir takes no responsibility, he submits everything, however insignificant, to the inspector and awaits his orders, which he is ready to carry out. The more he effaces himself, the more he does, so he believes, to please his inspector. If the latter should commit an error, he will allow it to pass rather than offer an observation which might be badly received.

"And so it is all over. It is notorious that the English will not put up with an Egyptian official unless he is willing to play the part of dummy. The country is in this way deprived of the services of those of its children who have an opinion on her real needs, and who have the courage to express that opinion.

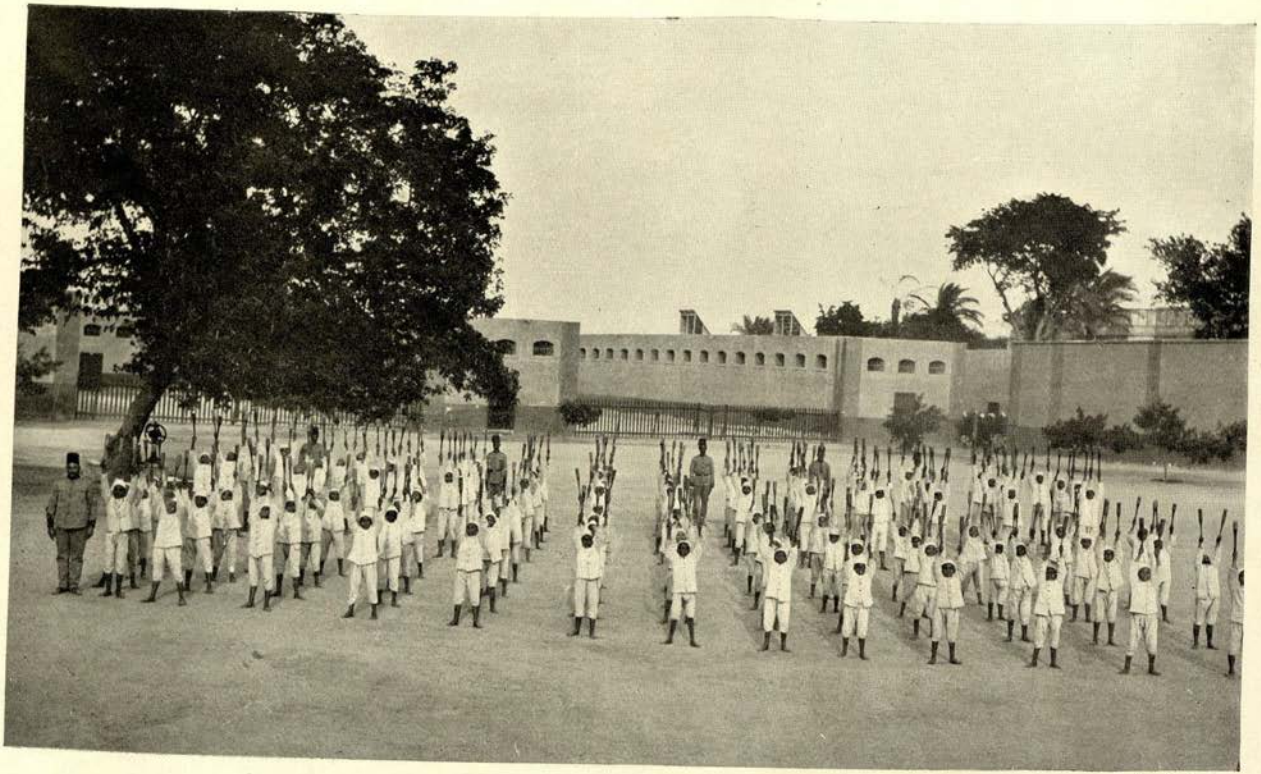
"In the Department of Justice the same fault exists, with the aggravating circumstance that with an Egyptian judge of a passive disposition, easily influenced by his English colleague, the danger may arise that he will not give an opinion according to his conscience. This danger is very great, and the evil a very serious one.

"Another danger is the ease with which the law of the country is made. Each Englishman constitutes himself a legislator, and attempts to modify the law as it suits him. He submits his work to the Ministerial Council, which, as every one knows, is an assembly of mutes, who sign whatever is put before them. The only control exercised is by the Legislative Council. But this assembly has only a consultative power, and the members of it who are up to their work are very few.

"What is required is a kind of State Council, before which would come all proposals in regard to the Law. There they would receive serious consideration. The good would pass, the bad would be rejected.

"MOHAMED ABDOU,
"Grand Moufti of Egypt."

I have given the Grand Moufti's remarks. I leave to those



Sanderson

THE REFORMATORY

more competent than myself the task of approving or refuting his criticisms.

Egypt possesses the greatest Mussulman University in the world, El Azar, established for nine centuries, and whose reputation throughout Islam was at one time enormous, and is still to-day very great. It is there that the Sheiks and Uelmas of the Mussulman religion are turned out. It would be difficult to imagine an institution more backward, more *routinière*, more impossible. The pupil passes eight, twelve, perhaps fifteen years in reading ancient Arab books, in discussing the exact meaning of certain words, or in comparing the construction of "ideal phrases," whilst remaining crassly ignorant of every latter-day question or of the progress of civilisation.

After their long and useless studies are completed, these men become professors or Sheiks in their villages, where they can only spread the vain knowledge they have acquired. Knowing to what an extent his Highness the Khedive interests himself in all which relates either to the religion or the future of his country, I have no doubt that he will take in hand, at the moment which he judges opportune and with his usual energy, the question of the reform of the University.

On the occasion of the centenary of the accession of Mohamed Ali, founder of the present dynasty, several Princes of the Khedivial family and other distinguished Egyptians decided to collect the amount necessary to found a great University on modern lines. It is certain that an institution of this kind would render a very great service to the cause of civilisation in Egypt, and it is to be hoped that the efforts of the generous promoters of the scheme will succeed. A large sum has already been subscribed principally by the Khedive and the Egyptian Princes. This sum being still insufficient for the founding of a University, it has been decided to employ it in creating a certain number of bursaries, by which young Egyptians will be enabled to undertake their studies in the different European capitals.

Just as the idea of the University is a good one, so is that of sending the students abroad a bad one. In the opinion of those best able to judge, and I have questioned Egyptians, English and French, the results obtained by this method are

detestable. With very few exceptions the young Egyptians sent to Europe, finding themselves far from home, in a strange land, badly looked after, take on only a veneer of our civilisation. Pleasures attract them, and too often their studies and their duties are forgotten. In France the temptations are very great; and in England, where College and University life is more strict, the young Egyptian, considered without reason as an inferior, is badly treated by his English comrades, and returns with a heart full of hatred and bitterness.

It is then in Egypt and at their own doors that modern means of education must be provided. The primary and secondary schools (all paying) have already made great progress, as much from the point of view of learning as from that of behaviour, discipline, hygiene and cleanliness. Those which I have visited produced on me an excellent impression. The children, clean, well behaved, and, above all, well fed, looked smart, contented and happy. I found amongst them children sent from Java and Zanzibar to be educated. The majority, as is natural, are Mussulmans; but there are, besides, Christians, Copts, Greeks, Armenians and also Jews. The study of the Koran is not compulsory; but the greater part of the Copts take the course, for it is the best, almost the unique book of Arabic literature. The native teachers seemed well qualified for their task except in the teaching of English, where their pronunciation left much to be desired. They seemed also to be enthusiastic in their work.

Things are very different, so I have been told, in the provinces, where the small village schools, the Kouttabs, are nests of dirt, ignorance and even brutality. From the tenderest age, the Egyptian child is threatened with the schoolmaster and his rod, as with us we threaten the appearance of the bogey man, with the result that the school for him becomes a vision of all that is terrible.

When the Grand Moufti wrote to me that in Egypt there were no philanthropists willing to set aside part of their fortunes for the advancement of education, he was ignorant, no doubt, of the work which Boghos Nubar Pasha, son of the celebrated statesman, has just founded, and which he describes in these words:

"My object has been to come to the aid of these young men who, on account of recent events in Turkey, have been obliged in the last few years to emigrate to different parts of Europe, and of whom a large number, entirely without resources, have sought refuge in Egypt. I have thought that in giving facilities to some of these to study commerce, for which our race (Armenian) has a special aptitude, they would find themselves better equipped for the struggle for existence, and would enter on a career with much better chances of success. I have therefore decided to establish a School of Commerce, which, although founded for Armenians, will not close its doors to young men of other nationalities and religions. I have made one restriction only in order to preserve an Armenian majority, and that is that two-thirds of the total number of pupils shall be of that nationality. The teaching will be given in English and French, and the course of study shall approximate to that of Schools of Commerce in Europe. In order to give stability to my school and a guarantee for its future as regards the funds necessary for its upkeep, I intend to invest a sum in real estate, the income from which will belong to the school, and I shall constitute everything—school and gift—as what our Ottoman law calls a Wakf, that is to say a property which shall be inalienable, and the management of which shall be controlled by an Administration of the State.

Lekegian

BOGHOS NUBAR PASHA

"I shall add in conclusion that I am exceedingly grateful to the Government and Lord Cromer, who have given me every encouragement, and who have promised to facilitate the

acquisition of the necessary site, and to lend me later the assistance of several of the Professors attached to the Government schools."

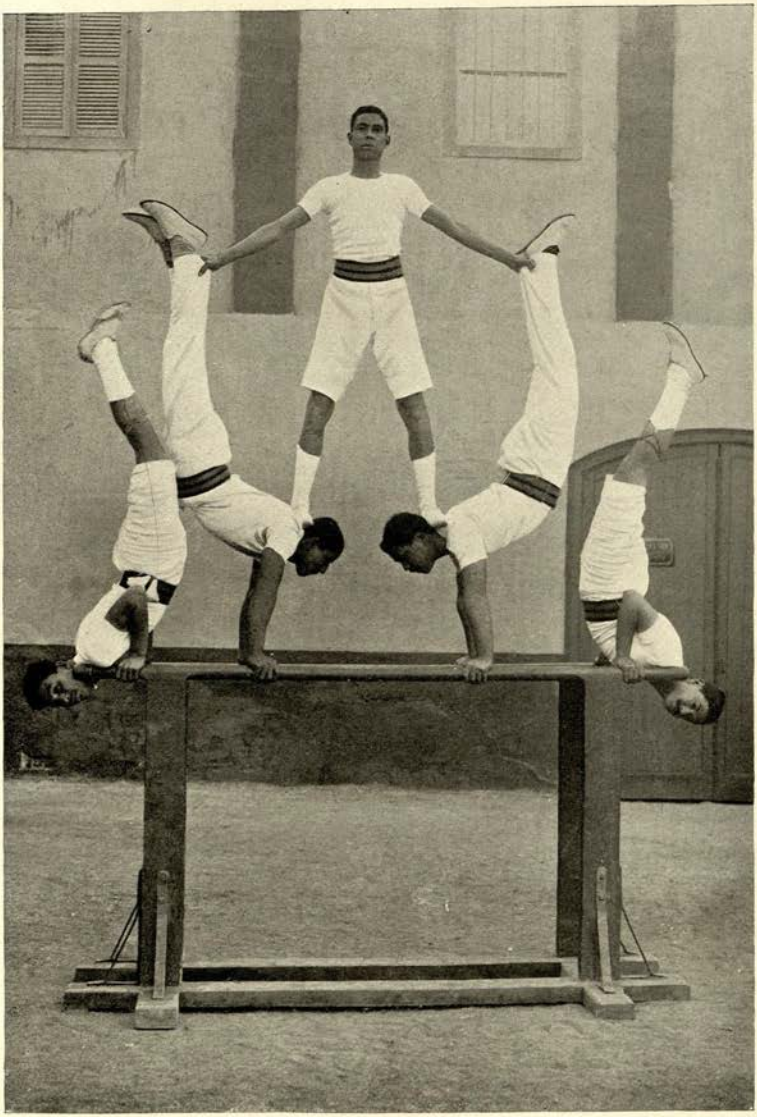
That is, I think, an example worthy of the highest praise, and it is to be hoped that it is but the first step, followed by many others, towards the generous and philanthropic effort desired by the Grand Moufti.

There is another institution in which Lord Cromer is particularly interested, the Reformatory, situated in the country on the road to the Pyramids, where the little vagabonds and children who have committed some crime or other are sent. Admirably thought out and managed, this institution, a model of its kind, renders an immense service, and will be called on to render greater.

"Think of it," Lord Cromer said to me one day, "the Egyptians, convinced that the Reformatory is the best school which we have in Egypt, ask to have their children sent there!"

I must say I was delighted with the visit I paid to it. The Director, an excellent fellow with a cheery face, showed me round and proved to me that, although under strict discipline, the children are perfectly happy and take well to the life which they must lead. Besides reading, writing and arithmetic, each one is taught a trade, shoemaking, tailoring, bookbinding, carpentering, &c., &c. I visited the workshops, and was able to admire the excellent work done. The children are paid for their work, and, on their leaving the establishment, the amount is handed over to them.

After having visited the buildings, the Director asked me to seat myself in a chair which had been placed in an immense courtyard, where I witnessed a most interesting military and gymnastic display. These children, admirably trained, had a strength, agility and a power of endurance which was really remarkable. During the whole of the performance a band of sixty-five musicians, made up of children of ten to fifteen years of age, performed various pieces *con brio incredibile*. I had seen nothing like it, and my enthusiasm getting the better of me, I was about to applaud, when all these little *reformés* in their uniform of striped blue and white, marched past me,



Lekegian

GYMNASTICS AT THE POLICE SCHOOL

music in front, preceded by a drum-major about the height of my riding boot, and aged eight years!

For a long time now complaints have been rife in Egypt with regard to the police, and certainly they are far from what they should be. Brutal towards the weak, cringing towards the strong, utterly ignorant, and always willing to shut their eyes and open their hands—that, I believe, is a perfectly just description of the police as they existed only yesterday. To-day they are far from being brilliant, but at least some progress has been made, and, thanks to the energy of the Under-Secretary, Adviser to the Minister of the Interior, Captain Machell, there is reason to hope that in the near future a great improvement will take place.

The whole trouble arises from the fact that, through lack of necessary funds which at present it is impossible to obtain, the police is recruited from the army, and this, owing to the detestable system of recruiting in vogue, is composed of the dregs of the population.

According to the present law any Egyptian able to pay the sum of £20 is exempt from military service. When Egypt was still very poor, the number of families who were in a position to pay this amount was very small, and the Government was able to choose amongst the "condemned" the best specimens from a physical and mental point of view. I say "condemned," because for the Egyptian to be taken from his family and his land, and to be enrolled in the army, is a punishment quite as great as being put in prison, with the difference that the latter only happens to him when he is guilty of some crime, whereas in the former case his only crime is his inability to pay his £20.

It must be remembered also that for centuries the unfortunate fellaheen were forced to serve in the army, where, badly clothed, badly fed, badly treated, and the greater part of the time unpaid, sent to the centre of Africa, from which they seldom returned, they could not but receive a very poor opinion of a military career. Many preferred to lose an eye or cut off the index finger, rather than serve. To-day, without being quite such a nightmare to him, service in the army is the thing above all others which he wishes to avoid; and to do so he will sell

all that he and his family possess, and when those who have been unable to pay the amount must leave their village all the relatives turn out, sobbing, crying, and shouting in their grief.

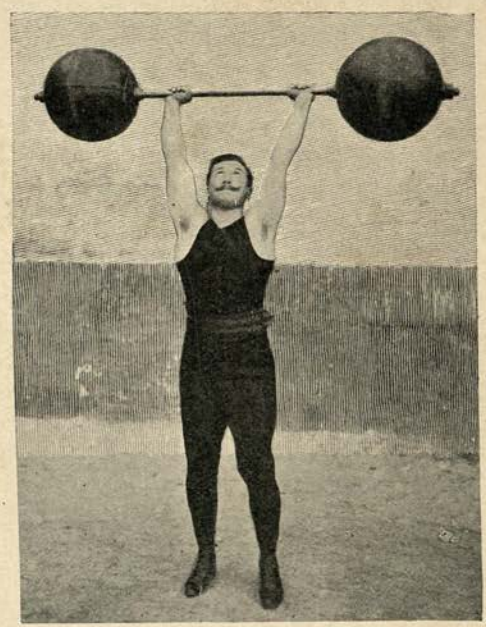
It naturally follows, therefore, that with the increasing prosperity of the country, only the most miserable and destitute are unable to pay the tax of exemption, and that the recruits obtained for the army represent the dullest, most ignorant and lowest type which it is possible to find.

Lord Cromer and the Egyptian Government are well aware of the evil effects of this law, which deprives the poorest families of the labour of which they are in need, whilst supplying Egypt with very inferior soldiers, and it is probable that measures will shortly be taken to alter it. It can be easily understood that the soldiers taken from the army to fulfil the duties of police are far from possessing the necessary moral or intellectual qualities. It is to remedy this state of affairs that Captain Machell has founded a "Police School," which has already given excellent results, and which is to be considerably enlarged. The object of this school is the training of officers and non-commissioned officers, to give them a thorough knowledge of their work, so that they will be able not only to command the men under them, but also to train and instruct them. It is necessary for entrance to the school to possess a primary education certificate, and when the school was founded the pupils accepted received a sum of £2 per month, besides food, lodging and washing. But as Egypt is the land of paradox, it was soon found that the fact of a payment being made to the pupils, far from attracting the class desired, repelled them. The system was therefore changed, and instead of being paid the pupils were asked to pay the sum of £30 for their education. The result was excellent, and a large number of young men present themselves each year for enrolment.

The school at present consists of twenty-four officer pupils and forty non-commissioned pupils, but when the new buildings are completed the figures will be raised to sixty and seven hundred respectively. The classes are taught by professors from the School of Law, and the instruction given is of a practical kind, consisting of the duties of the police, the law and its application, the manner of drawing up a report, and criminal

investigation. On quitting the school they are equipped with a thorough knowledge of administrative and police regulations.

Moral training goes hand in hand with a complete system of gymnastics. Shooting, riding, and care of their mounts are also taught. I do not believe that a race exists so open to physical development as the Egyptians. The results obtained at the Police Schools are really marvellous. In a few weeks, chests develop and expand, enormous muscles appear on arm and leg, and the men go through their exercises with a strength and agility unsurpassed. I have been present at these exercises, and found them most interesting and worthy of a Hippodrome. The pupils are well treated, food is plentiful, the dormitories comfortable, whilst excellent bathrooms and douches are provided, the daily use of which is obligatory.



Lekegian

THE STRONG MAN OF THE POLICE SCHOOL

In a country in which everything was in need of alteration and reconstruction, and in which the police were such as I have briefly described, one can imagine the condition of the prisons. The prisoners lived in an atmosphere that was putrid, and were not even fed. If their relations or friends thought of bringing them something to eat, so much the better; if they forgot, so much the worse. Many of these unfortunate people were imprisoned on some trumped-up charge made by an enemy.

In the case of the prisons, as in everything else, it was necessary to alter, reconstruct and reorganise everything. Close

on £220,000 has been expended on improvements within the last few years, and progress still continues to be made. But no time should be lost; for, strange as it may seem, crimes and offences have considerably increased along with the increased wealth and prosperity of the country. That is one of these phenomena for which Egypt is celebrated, and which I can match with another.

At Cairo there existed formerly an octroi or customs, to which all produce and provisions entering the town were obliged to pay tax. Living having become very expensive, it was decided to abolish the octroi. On the very day on which this was done, the prices of provisions increased considerably, and have continued to rise to this day, when one has to pay 50 per cent. more for everything than was the case a short time ago.

Lord Cromer takes the greatest interest in educational questions, and his opinions are well known. Contrary to the idea current in France, he does not believe that any political influence whatever can be obtained in a country like Egypt by forcing the tongue of the protecting nation on the people. He is, therefore, strongly opposed to the teaching of English in the purely Egyptian schools. Neither is he in favour of increasing the primary and secondary schools on European lines, from which the pupil issues despising industry, agriculture and trade, and seeking only to commence life as a clerk in a Government office or an employee in a Company, with the appearance of a gentleman.

Lord Cromer advises establishing in each village or in each quarter of the large cities a Kouttab or primary school; and a school of the same kind, but giving a more advanced education, in the principal towns, and the affiliation of these with industrial and professional schools, also colleges of horticulture and agriculture. According to him, and his view certainly seems the right one, what Egypt most requires is not a supply of clerks, but of agriculturists, up-to-date horticulturists, mechanics, electricians, carpenters, skilled workmen, in fact, whose hands will be guided by a trained brain, developed by a practical and modern education.

There is at Mansourah an excellent technical school, where

joinery and cabinet-making are taught to about seventy pupils. The work executed in the workshops by the children is sold, and last year brought in a sum of £1000.

Finally, in connection with this subject, model workshops will be opened in all the towns in Egypt. Cairo already possesses an important one, whilst another is in course of construction at Assiout, which will cost no less than £16,000.

There remain to be said a few words on the School of Medicine founded by the celebrated Dr. Clot, a Frenchman, who, I believe,

A KOUTTAB SCHOOL

came to Egypt in 1825, and whose bust is to be seen in the garden of the school. Little by little the school has become Anglicised, and the faculty is now entirely composed of English doctors. I believe the reason of this change to be that most of the Egyptian students prefer to study in English, which, in view of the actual condition of affairs, they find most useful to them, and that it would be impossible to have classes in both that language and French.

Under the able guidance of Dr. Keatinge, the School of Medicine to-day counts one hundred students, who give one a most favourable impression. All the arrangements for study are excellent, and the pupils possess a club where meals are

provided for 7½*d.* a day. Alcoholic liquors, cards and politics are taboo!

At the side of the school is the great Hospital of Kasr-el-Ainy, to which are attached schools for nurses and midwives, also a most interesting museum. The buildings of the hospital are in a shocking state, and I must admit I cannot understand why large sums are continually being expended in patching them up when no amount of patchwork will do the slightest

Lekegian

A BOY'S SCHOOL

good. There is only one solution, and that is to pull down the entire building and rebuild. Money is wanted, but money can be found. The different wards of the hospital are arranged as in Europe, but the greatest difficulty is experienced in making the patients stay in bed; they much prefer to squat on a blanket placed on the floor. The men are looked after by male nurses; the presence of women, they tell me, would quite upset them!

Most of the unfortunate creatures who come for treatment are in a state of disgusting filth and swarming with vermin.

Lekegian

A CLASS OF CHEIKS

It is necessary, therefore, to evacuate the wards one by one, and re-paint them from top to bottom—which reminds me of a story told to me by a young Egyptian one day when we happened to pass in the street a poor beggar who, having made a suitable aperture in his garments, was searching diligently for something which was evidently annoying him, a common enough sight in Egypt.

"He is seeking his fortune," said my friend.

"His what?" said I.

"His fortune of course," he repeated; "don't you know that one of the Rothschilds has been making a collection of fleas? Now he has succeeded in obtaining almost every type known. Only two specimens are still lacking, and for these he is ready to pay an enormous sum. Lately he came to Egypt, land of the flea *par excellence*, in the hope of finding them. In spite of the help in his researches of a doctor well-known in Cairo, he has not succeeded; so you can understand that every flea-bitten native in the valley of the Nile now lives in the hope that one day he may find between his thumb and his first finger that precious flea to sell to the 'Baron des Puces,' as they call the gentleman here."

And to think of teaching them after that the advantage of getting rid of such aids to fortune!

One of the best of the works of charity has been founded in memory of the late Lady Cromer, the Home for Foundlings, the number of which, alas, is very numerous in Cairo. The mothers usually leave them immediately after their birth, absolutely naked, in some waste piece of ground or uninhabited alley. The little unfortunates, found, perhaps several hours after in a terrible state, are taken to the Home to be cared for with a kindness which would have brought joy to the heart of the lady in whose name the good work is carried on. The children thus saved are generally adopted by those women who have none. In fact, their religion teaching the Mussulman women that they cannot enter Paradise unless they have had a child, those who for one reason or another have had none do not hesitate to adopt one, in the hope that this act, in default of the other, will open to them the gates of Heaven.

Dr. Keatinge, who accompanied me in the course of my

visits to the School of Medicine and the Hospital, and who spared me no detail, took me also to see the museum. We made our way through rooms full of jars containing all the organs of the body, attacked by the most unlikely diseases, rooms where hundreds of entire mummies, or of heads, arms or legs lying pell-mell, gave one a weird impression. In another room, in fine show-cases, lay teeth and hair centuries old, stomachs and other mummified organs in perfect preservation. From

LATE LADY CROMER'S HOME FOR FOUNDLINGS

there we passed into the laboratories, where gentlemen celebrated in the medical world were performing various unpleasant feats of cookery over electric furnaces, and with stills full of blood.

"Now," said Dr. Keatinge, "come and have a look at our brains, we are rather proud of them!"

Brains! Heavens! There were thousands of them, of all sizes, of all colours—I had almost said cooked in every way—in immense glass jars. One was enormous, taken from the skull of an Egyptian killed by the tram last winter, the largest brain known, and belonging—to the disgust of the *savants*—

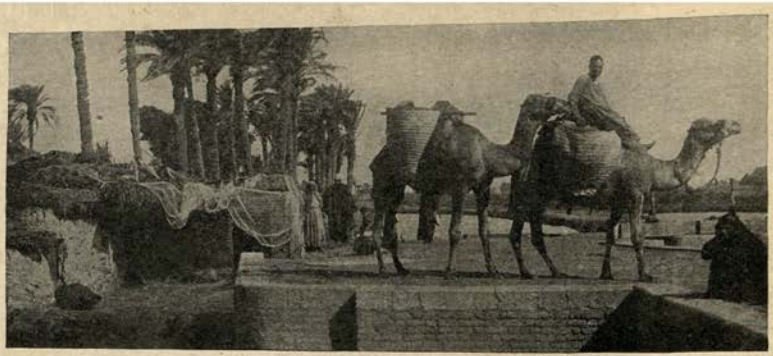
to a man who died unknown, his identity never having been established.

But why these brains? Simply because the famous Professor Elliott Smith, in the service of the Egyptian Government and the greatest authority on the subject, has given himself up for some years to important studies in regard to them. Surrounded by all these bottled brains and dried brains,* I found mine working badly; but I understand that Professor Elliott Smith has at last discovered that we possess at the base of our brain a point which up to now has been found only in monkeys (or perhaps it is the other way round, I am not sure), which proves conclusively, of course, that we all belong to the same family. Leaving the room I could not resist putting one hand to my head to make sure that I had not left it behind in a glass jar, and the other I carried to my — back, with a vague suspicion that I might there meet with a long and hairy tail!

One o'clock struck. In his softest tones Dr. Keatinge turned to me and said, "Let's have lunch. Are you hungry?"

"Um!" I replied. "I certainly feel as if my inside was mummi—I mean empty. Yes, I believe I could do with something; but, doctor, if you love me, no brains!"

* I also saw these brains dried by a new system, which preserves their size, their weight, and their elasticity.



LOADED CAMELS

CHAPTER XII

CAIRO TO LUXOR

The Nile by day and night—The *fellaheen* and their fields—Wealth and fruitfulness—The ruins, temples and tombs—Memphis, Sakkara, Beni Hassan and Assiout—Missionaries, Catholic and Protestant—Influence of the American Missions—Evangelising and living—The marvellous Lake—Ancient history.

"THE ascent of the Nile!" These words, in all languages and since the world began, have suggested the ideal voyage of man. The Greeks and the Romans dreamt of it centuries ago, and the millionaires of the time undertook what was then a long, difficult and costly journey, in order to visit the ruins of Thebes, and the Elephantine Island. The desire is still present with us, and there is no more ideal way of passing the winter months than by slowly ascending the famous river on board a dahabeah. These boats, easily hired at Cairo, are furnished with every comfort. Only a few years ago all the dahabeahs were provided with sails, and one journeyed slowly at the pleasure of the wind, stopping here and there as one wished. To-day, when all the world is in a hurry, steam dahabeahs have been built, quite as comfortable as the others, and with this advantage, that, no matter what the weather, progress can always be made, and those parts which are of little interest quickly passed.

But dahabeahs are not within the reach of every purse; according to the number of persons travelling together they cost from £400 to £600 a month, everything included. If the party consists of eight or ten it is not much; if only two or three, it becomes costly; whilst if one is travelling alone (which happens sometimes even in Egypt), it is too expensive and too lonely. Fortunately there are Cook's famous services of express boats* between Cairo, Luxor and Assouan, besides their tourist steamers. The latter are very popular and deservedly so, for it is impossible to wish for greater comfort. The *Rameses*, the *Rameses III.* and the *Rameses the Great*, which undertake the service, are fine boats, built, of course, on a very different plan from our ocean steamers. Their draught is almost nil, scarcely three feet, I believe, and the whole of the boat is therefore above the level of the water, like a large house of three stories. Besides sleeping accommodation, dining-room, library and smoking-room, there is on the upper deck, in the centre of the boat and occupying the entire width, a fine open space which forms a large hall. Tables, arm-chairs, easy-chairs, soft Eastern carpets and green plants make a charming resort and a favourite one with all the passengers. It is there that after meals coffee is served, there that afternoon tea is taken, there where one can chat or play cards or enjoy music, whilst able at any moment to glance out on the banks of the river. If the evenings are chilly, large awnings are let down round the deck, and by means of these an immense *salon* is quickly made, brightly lit by numerous electric lamps, and where impromptu dances can be held. The food is excellent and unlimited.

Wherever there is something of interest to be seen the boat stops, and donkeys, guides, or, if desired, chairs with porters, await the passengers, the cost of which is included in the ticket.†

The most important person on board is the Dragoman,

* These express boats, although very comfortable, cost much less, and the voyage is shorter.

† For some years Cook has no longer had the monopoly of the steamboat service on the Nile. The Anglo-American Nile Co. has a similar service, the comfort of which leaves nothing to be desired. The prices are the same, and vary, according to the cabin, from £40 to £60, for a voyage which lasts about twenty-one days.

who arranges the excursions and gives all the explanations desired, in many languages. Somewhat shorter than these polyglot performances, I give below a few extracts from my diary:

"On board the *Rameses*,
"*December* 20, 1904.

"What weather! Can this be Egypt? The heavens are black, and rain descends in torrents. In spite of the

S.S. "RAMESES" Sanderson

carriage hood I have been drenched between the hotel and the landing stage. Why the devil don't they have closed carriages in Cairo? Certainly days like this are few, but still they do exist, and every now and then we are reminded that it is winter.*

"After the lovely sunny days we have had the sudden change; short as it is, it is severely felt, and no one coming to Egypt should neglect to bring warm winter clothing. It is a

* It must be borne in mind that the winter of 1904–5 was a severe one everywhere. Even Algiers and Tunis were visited by snow.

detestable climate for those with weak lungs, at least as far as Cairo is concerned; too much dust and dirt in the air, and too relaxing. An old resident said to me yesterday, '*To send consumptives here is a crime.*' This year there was a lot of fog at Cairo, and they say that the climate is changing, the irrigation and the number of trees planted attracting a quantity of dampness and rain hitherto unknown. The grumblers pretend that it is the effect of the English occupation, which has brought fog and influenza in its train!

"At the landing stage I am surrounded by a crowd of Arabs, all of whom claim to have brought my baggage. I have twelve packages and there are forty Arabs. They are insupportable. I am not really a bad-tempered fellow, but I must own I have a strong desire to smack them over the head with my cane.

* * * * *

"All the flags soaked and hanging miserably, the *Rameses* started sadly on her voyage, and we leave Cairo, wrapped in a grey veil of mist, far behind. It is freezing! Seated on the bridge, smothered in coats and rugs, we gaze on the flat melancholy banks. Here and there, enthusiastic fishermen watch their lines, oblivious of the drenching rain. In the fields the peasants, seated at the side of the cut cane, shiver and utter wild cries as we pass.

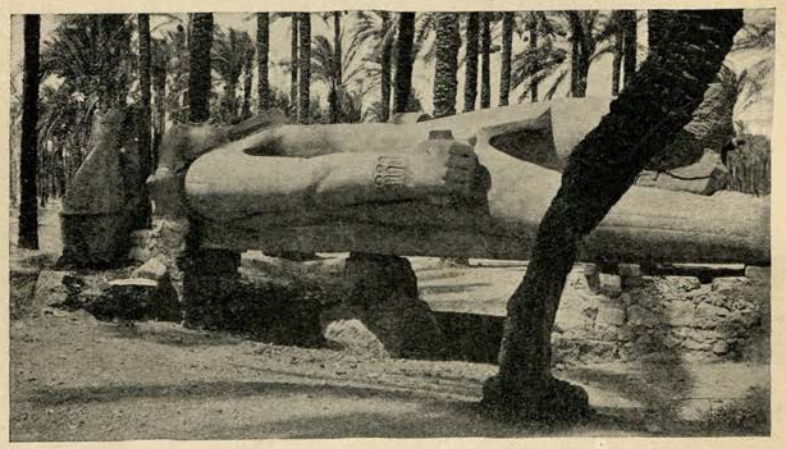
"One o'clock. An excellent lunch has warmed and consoled us. We have just arrived at Bedrachen. From here a start is made to visit Sakkara and the ruins of Memphis. Bravely, armed with mackintoshes and umbrellas, we leave the *Rameses*, and men and women straddle the donkeys. The situation is so ridiculous, and there are amongst us some such curious specimens, that we end by laughing. To come to Egypt to be soaked, and to have the end of your nose red,—this is indeed the height of pleasure. However, for once there is no dust!

"Two hours' donkey ride across flooded fields, past clumps of palm trees, that would be delicious if only the Egyptian sunshine would favour us, but, alas, no such luck; all the same we must be fair, such days are almost unknown in Egypt.

"Now we are on the site occupied thousands of years ago by Memphis, the celebrated city, founded, so they say, by

Menes, the capital of the Sovereigns of the 'Ancient Empire,' and the immensity of which was such that half a day's journey was necessary to traverse it. Some mounds of earth sheltered by palm trees, that is all to be seen to-day. Before arriving we pass, lying under the palms, the immense statues of Rameses II., over twenty-five feet high.

"At last we find ourselves before a small house, quite modern, with a large terrace. It was here that Mariette lived, the famous French Egyptologist, who, in 1851, discovered



STATUE OF RAMESES II.

the tomb of Apis, and, later, the immense necropolis of Sakkara. Mariette who, for thirty years, directing the excavations in Egypt, re-discovered this ancient civilisation, and did more to reconstruct the history of Egypt than any other man.

"Apis, whose tomb has now been discovered, was the sacred bull worshipped by the inhabitants of Memphis, as in other villages dogs, cats, or even crocodiles, are objects of adoration. Tastes differ, we shall not discuss them.

"At Memphis the tombs of the sacred bulls are celebrated monuments, which one must see: each tomb has its chapel. History informs us that Apis was born of a cow, whose time of producing calves was over, but on whom one day a flash of lightning descended from heaven, and . . . Apis was born:

quite black with a white mark in the centre of the forehead, an eagle on the back, and the hairs on the tail double. Nowadays Apis would have been sent to Barnum; in those days they made a god of him.

"And this is the City of the Dead! The necropolis of Sakkara is five miles long by half a mile in breadth, and this immense space is covered with the most extraordinary monuments. Here and there, scattered amidst the ruins, are wonderful masterpieces. The bas-reliefs, carved and painted, are most interesting, showing as they do the whole life of a great people; how, thirty centuries ago, they sowed and reaped, how they built their boats, made their furniture, prepared their meals, and, lastly, stuffed . . . their geese! Truly, for I am not joking, and I saw a charming little bas-relief where a gentleman, whose tailor's bill cannot have worried him much, stuffed with full hands the unfortunate birds whose livers were destined to supply the succulent *pâtés*. Oh, Strasbourg, thou who possesseth not bas-reliefs to illustrate the industry which is thy glory, who will think of thee and thy *foies gras* six thousand years hence? Follow my counsel, ancient city of Alsace, and provide thyself immediately with bas-reliefs. May Memphis serve thee as a model! Taken by assault by Cambyses, B.C. 525, occupied by the Persians, sacked by the Christians under Theodosius, razed to the ground by Mahomedans and heaven knows what else, the bas-reliefs still exist, and show us to this day how at Memphis man triumphed over the goose!

"*December* 21.

"This morning I experienced a shock, a violent shock, and it was the waters of the Nile which caused it. There are on the *Rameses* excellent bathrooms, and I had promised myself matutinal ablutions pleasant and comfortable. Wakening early I ordered my bath from the Arab servant at six o'clock. A few minutes later I entered the bathroom, and it was then that I received the shock. The magnificent bath was full of dark yellow mud, very dark, almost black, thick and repulsive. Questioned, I heard the Arab vaguely murmur as he closed the door behind him, 'Nile water, very clean.' Very

clean! I turned the tap and from it oozed the same liquid mud; and then this problem, difficult to solve, presented itself to my mind: 'Shall I be not cleaner, but less dirty, by going without my bath, or by steeping myself each morning in this mud?' I calculate that we shall not arrive in Assouan for twelve days . . . in the first case I shall have on my skin the accumulation of two hundred and eighty-eight hours, and in the second, I shall have twelve superimposed coatings of *fertilising mud*. The idea of the latter rather amuses me; knowing its wonderful properties I begin to speculate on what crops I am likely to raise, and begin to imagine that I shall find in time on my person small plantations of sugar-cane, with here and there, perhaps, a stray mushroom! I hesitate no longer, and make the plunge. The sensation is not disagreeable, but unfortunately the idea suddenly strikes me that the Arab, born lazy, could very well save himself the trouble of changing the water, and that there never will be anything but mud. The thought is not a pleasant one, and I jump from out the bath.

"No one is about, and I venture on to the deck in my pyjamas. The rain has ceased, but the fog is still around us. Suddenly, in the grey of the distance, I can see, as through a thick veil, the tall chimneys of a manufactory,* then a number of roofs, and, finally, a forest of masts. We are evidently approaching a town of some importance, and, upon my word, we might be on the Thames rather than on the Nile.

"Hardly had I formed this opinion when a ray of sunshine striking through the fog rested on a high minaret brilliantly white. Thanks be to God, who alone could so transform the scene! As by a miracle the mist dissolves, and far as the eye can reach the land of Egypt, pulsing with life, lies bathed in the golden beams of the glorious sun.

"Set in a girdle of green, the town appears gleaming in pearly white, with, here and there, a spot of rose or blue, where the walls of some large house shed a tender colour through the green of the trees. But the Egyptian towns are best seen at a distance. What, afar off, appears to be a superb palace, is often naught but a miserable building with dilapidated walls,

* Sugar-works.

Sanderson

COUNTRY SCENE NEAR CAIRO

and at the windows of which one need not be surprised at the sudden apparition of the horned head of a goat.

" Hundreds of boats are moored to the banks, and on every side donkeys, camels, men wonderfully loaded, bring up the grain, onions, vegetables, sugar-cane, goods of every sort, including bales of old rags, descending the Nile *en route* to Cairo, Alexandria, Europe and America.

" Yes, even here come the agents of the large paper-making

Lekegian

NATIVE BOATS

firms in the States to buy the loathly rags from the poorest peasants; and these remnants some day will return to us, to you and to me, under the guise of a perfumed *billet doux*, or a magazine. Nothing certainly seems to be lost in this world. Look, for instance, at these huge dovecots, of which you will see thousands along the banks of the Nile. Would it surprise you to learn that these millions of birds are raised simply that they may supply guano for fertilisation ?

" The town has now dropped astern. On the left, in the distance, curious mountains, parched and bare, rise towards the

blue of the sky with their steep and even outlines. Not a point is visible, the summits here are flat as tables. From the river to their base the desert stretches, too high to allow of the fertilising waters of the Nile to overspread them. To the right, on the contrary, lies the lovely Egyptian land, flat and fertile, where, far as the eye can see, stretch the fields which constitute the wealth of the country. Men and women are working furiously, whilst swarms of children, all naked, disport themselves on the banks of the river. Everywhere the activity is extraordinary, and life seems intense.

"Here and there we pass little villages of mud huts, surrounded by palms, huts which look poor and miserable in the midst of the rich and fertile land. Across the fields or on the banks of the stream, long strings of donkeys, buffaloes, camels, or women wrapped in black shawls carrying on their heads immense jars, come and go without ceasing, their outlines cutting with a strange sharpness the line of earth and sky.

"On the left, the Desert and Nature . . . dead; on the right, cultivated fields . . . fertility and wealth. More than ever are we in the land of contrasts. High chimney-stacks vomiting forth black smoke at the side of a graceful minaret; here a modern steam-pump supplying the neighbouring fields with the water of the Nile, there naked men working without a moment's respite, raising the precious fluid by means of an ancient sakkhies. Far off a goods-train disappears rapidly in a cloud of dust, and, slowly winding its way alongside the track, a long procession of leisurely camels.

"A few yards away from a modern factory the peasant labours lovingly on his land with an ancient cart to which are harnessed a bullock and a camel, strange combination! centuries old. Here stands a Mosque cheek by jowl with a Christian (Coptic) Convent, on whose rounded dome there shines a cross. On the Nile itself the contrast is no less: the *Rameses* with her engines, her electric dynamos, her comfort and her luxury, meets or rapidly overtakes native craft, loaded to the gunwale, the same craft which have passed up and down on the bosom of the river for twenty or thirty centuries.

"'I am certain that that is just as it was in the time of our

Saviour!' This exclamation, uttered a few paces off, came from an elderly American lady, very bigoted, who, since we started, had been diligently studying Egypt as described in the Bible. Suddenly her eyes fell on my pyjamas, when she gave me one look, shocked and angry, which I am sure our Lord would not have approved of, but which, making me realise the somewhat scanty nature of my attire, drove me to seek the friendly shelter of my cabin.

"An hour later we passed a large dahabeah, stranded on

Dittrich

TEAM OF CAMEL AND BULLOCK

a sandbank. The whole of the crew, *completely naked*, were directing all their efforts to refloat her, whilst my American friend put on her glasses *to get a better view*. The doctor of the *Rameses* turned to me laughing and said, 'My dear fellow, your sin this morning was appearing in pyjamas; if you had had nothing, she would probably have honoured you with a second look through her glasses.' Which reminds me of the story of the rich Bostonian, who, a few winters ago, hired a large dahabeah, on which he had, amongst his other guests, five or six charming young girls. Shortly after leaving, the boat touched on a sandbank, and immediately the crew, without any garments whatever, sought to heave her off. On the deck the passengers looked on. Our American, who had never before seen an Arab in a state of nature, was horrified at the

sight, and, rushing to the manager, he exclaimed, 'Look at those men, how dare they, and those young ladies on board!' 'But, sir,' said the manager, 'we take no notice of those things here.' 'No notice!' said the other, furious. 'How can you help it? Send at once to Cairo for bathing-drawers for all these men.' And gathering the bevy of fair damsels under his wing, he drew their attention to other and less exciting things. I believe the gentleman had his *fiancée* on board, which may have increased his anxiety.

"*December* 22.

"To-day has been ideal. On deck, up till six o'clock in the

PIGEON HOUSES

evening, we have enjoyed a delicious sun-bath. One might have imagined that it was the month of June. I cannot understand those who say that the Nile is monotonous; for me, every minute, it has a different charm, and I could voyage on its waters for weeks without fatigue.

"Our Dragoman has just seated himself beside me. He is a fine-looking man, a superb type of Arab, and very intelligent. He speaks four or five languages fluently, and passed several months of last year at the St. Louis Exhibition. The Yankees did all they could to astonish him, but without success. After having shown him sleeping-cars, lifts, machinery of all sorts, the products of American genius, and some of which was destined for Egypt, he remarked quietly, 'I see, I see; it seems

you make all that, and we buy it. You are the workmen who do the work, we are the gentlemen who pay!'

"One day when some particularly powerful machine had been shown to him, he shook his head and said to the horrified and shocked Americans, 'All that is nothing, nothing, I can assure you, compared with the natural power which God has given to us. He has made us males, powerful males, beside whom you are nothing but weak little children. That is why your women when they come to Egypt despise you and make gods of us!' And this terrible man proceeded to tell me stories of the various beautiful foreigners whom he had met, and, producing a pocket-book, he showed me

David Gardiner

PIGEON HOUSES

letters from women, with well-known names and of good family, which if published would give the world something to talk of.

"'For us,' he said, 'woman is all in all. It is she who, whilst we are on earth, gives to us glimpses of heaven!'

"Then he spoke to me of hashish, that extraordinary drug which excites the passions and ruins the constitutions of its devotees. What ravages has this hashish not committed in Egypt! Extracted from a plant grown in Greece, it is smuggled into the country in spite of all the preventitive efforts on the part of the Government. It kills, or makes mad, thousands of human beings, and Egypt has appealed in vain to Greece to put a stop to its cultivation. What does it matter

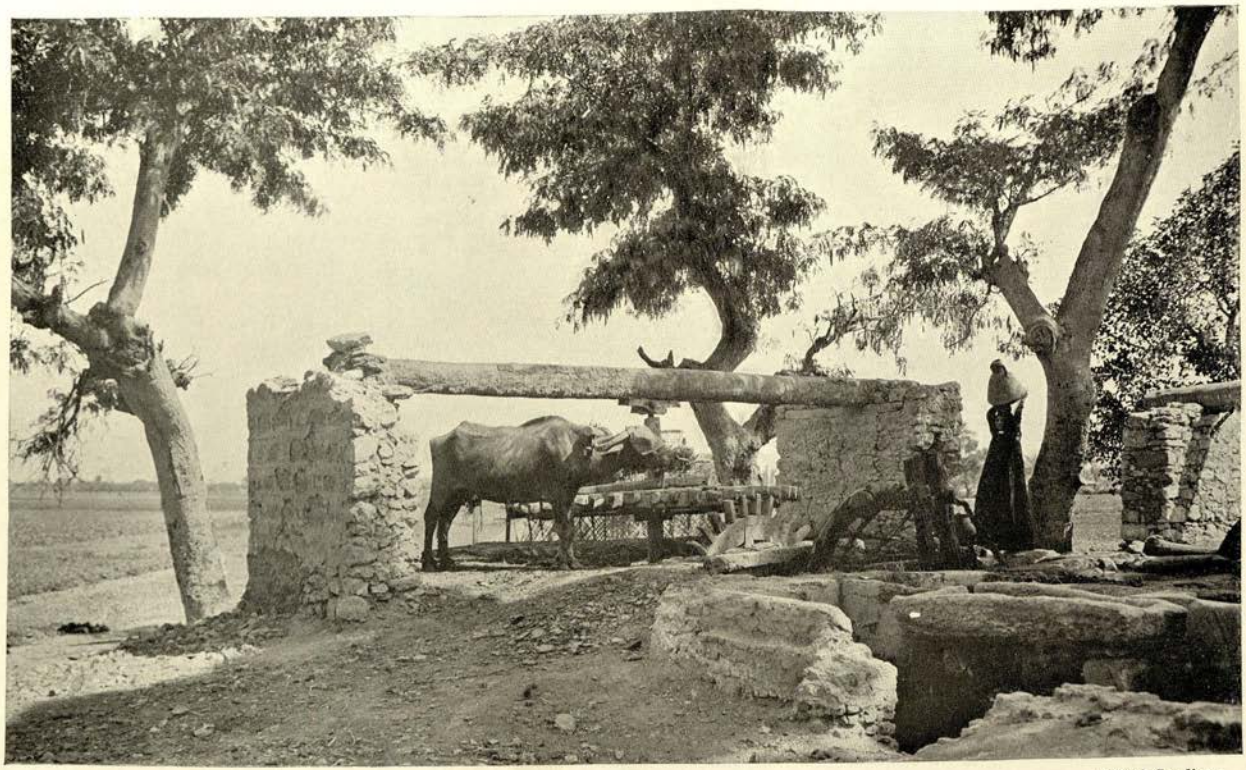
to the Greeks what may happen to a people, if only they can make their thousands ?

" This morning has been perfect, and on the deck of the *Rameses* we are enjoying to the full the beauty and the joy of life with every breath we draw. Numbers of wild birds, thousands of duck, disport themselves on the water or pass overhead in dense masses. That maddens a young Belgian, a great sportsman it seems, who passes his time in repeating, 'Ah ! If I only had my gun ! ' 'Well,' I said to him, 'what would be the use of your gun if you had it ? The *Rameses* would not stop to allow you to pick up your birds.' He looked at me astonished, and replied in the most natural way, 'But I should have had the satisfaction of killing them. Look ! what a grand shot ! ' There was the real man, with his inborn instinct to kill and destroy . . . 'the satisfaction of killing them ! '

" Towards mid-day it clouded over, a strong wind got up, and immense whirlwinds of sand rose in the Desert threatening and terrible. At the moment, we were arriving at Beni Hassan, where, on the banks, donkeys and donkey-boys awaited us, whilst a large number of the inhabitants, adults and infants, sought to board the boat with their cry of 'Backsheesh, backsheesh ! '

" Ah ! this backsheesh, there indeed is one of the plagues of the East in general and Egypt in particular. It is the tip, the palm-oil, that, with open hand, every one awaits. It is the bribe that formerly was pocketed always, and to-day often, by the Pasha, the Minister, or any one else in whose power lay the blessing or the damning of a scheme. Backsheesh ! that is the word that from one end of Egypt to the other accompanies the outstretched hand; and the thoughtless tourist, enjoying life, showers right and left the little white coins; foolish and stupid act, for thousands, harvesting thus in winter the small sum necessary to keep them the entire year (the native lives on so very little in Egypt), abandon all labour and live in idleness and vagrancy.

" Lord Cromer, whom nothing seems to escape, has lately had a circular printed, which is distributed to all tourists and placarded everywhere, explaining the extent of the evil, and



David Gardiner

"SAKIYEH," FOR PUMPING WATER

asking, for the good of the natives themselves, that the traveller should put a curb on his generosity and give only in return for some service rendered.

"The wind is now blowing half a gale, and the donkeys, which had been drawn up facing the steamer, refuse absolutely to keep the line and insist on turning tail to the storm. 'Backsheesh,' yell the Arabs, until two or three policemen, armed with enormous cudgels, fall on them with upraised arm, and, hitting out unmercifully, put them to flight.

"Immediately after lunch we mount our donkeys, and, notwithstanding the awful storm, we make our way to the tombs, cut out up there in the rock. There are in all thirty-nine, opening on to a terrace at the summit of the mountain, and dating back 4500 years. They are exceedingly interesting, not only because of their remarkable construction, but above all on account of the scenes of Egyptian life of the period carved on the walls, and which are to-day almost as fresh as when they left the hands of their creators forty centuries or so ago. Some of these enable us to realise a Desert hunt or a dance, or an attack on a fortress; others depict military reviews or assaults-at-arms. We see women weaving, shepherds leading their flocks to sacrifice, barbers, artists, wrestlers, dancers, and, lastly, homely pictures of the life of the man who here lay in his last long sleep. The most interesting tomb of all, in my opinion, is that of Ameny, who lived 2400 years before the Christian era. On column and wall, paintings and sculptures show to us all the events of his life of which he was proud. The inscriptions are numerous, and, in one of these, he begs those who may visit his tomb to pray that numerous gifts may be offered to his shade. 'Oh! ye who love Life and hate Death, pray that thousands of loaves and jars of beer, thousands of oxen and fowls may be sacrificed in remembrance of the Prince and Duke Ameny, triumphant!' A little further on he sings his own praises, and tells us 'that he was kind and generous, that he loved his town and his country, that all the great works were undertaken under his guidance, and that his successes were so great that the praise of his people mounted even to Heaven.'

"Ameny, my friend, I shall take your word for all that:

my means, unfortunately, will not permit of my sacrificing thousands of oxen to your remains; but if you can, from that far-off heaven in which you will certainly be seated unless you were a terrible old liar, make this infernal wind which is cutting us in two cease, and lay that dust which blinds us, I vow that, as soon as I return safely to the *Rameses*, I shall drink a bottle of the best in your honour.

"Alas! Ameny evidently did not appreciate my generosity, for the gale redoubled its fury, and we had considerable trouble in getting to the boat.

"Whilst we were seated on the well-sheltered deck having tea, a rumour spread that the passengers would assist in the evening at some native dances. Great excitement! The Dragoman was unearthed, but he, with a sad shake of his head, declared that such dances no longer exist. Only a few years ago, two or three evenings in the course of a voyage were given up to this class of entertainment, but many of the dances were of such an obscene character that the authorities put a stop to them. The story goes that a young Englishman who had become enslaved during one of these trips by a young American, was horrified with the realism of a certain dance. He awaited with fear and trembling the bitter remarks which the young lady should address to him for his having taken her to see it. When they had got outside, she did, in fact, open her lips and quietly remarked, 'Waal! I guess that woman had the most wonderful command of her abdominal muscles I ever saw!'

"Towards evening the wind died away, the palm-trees ceased to furiously shake their plumed heads, and we became the entranced spectators of one of those wonderful sunsets which are the glory of the Nile. What poet's pen or artist's brush can ever render this scene which Nature presents to our wondering eyes, to our awed and chastened minds? Little by little the daylight died, night fell, whilst on the horizon the sun descended in a blaze of purple and gold, a blaze which, first of a rich radiance, softened slowly into a tender echo of its former self. A profound silence covered the darkened land, the birds themselves ceased their flight, and, perching, seemed to await with a last look the sinking of the sun. The East lay black, there already the night had come; whilst the West,

steeped in a rosy glow, changed slowly to glimmering gold, paling more and more to a spectral white, until, strange and wondrous sight, darkness, sudden and complete, covered the earth."

"*December* 24.

"To-day we arrived at Assiout, a large town of 45,000 inhabitants, excellently situated at one of the widest parts of the Nile Valley, and surrounded by land wonderfully rich and fertile. At this place, across the river, there stretches an important dam, constructed at the same time as the reservoir at Assouan, and thanks to which the waters of the Nile are controlled. The landing-place is invaded by a crowd of Arab traders offering for sale the numerous products of the country; red pottery, shawls of extreme fineness embroidered with gold or silver, ebony canes with ivory handles, and a fabulous quantity of 'antiquities,' mostly from Birmingham or Germany.

"The finest donkeys in Egypt are at Assiout, so our Dragoman informed us, and, in fact, we found some splendid specimens and excellent saddles. The Egyptian donkeys are extremely elegant, and I admire them enormously. And such workers! They seem gifted with powers of endurance which no fatigue can conquer, and they are so frugal. This, alas, is obligatory. Poor beasts, my heart often bled to see the meagre fare given to them and the heavy blows they received. As for the donkey-boys, they are brutes, and I should have had the greatest pleasure in treating them as they treated their beasts.

"Carriages are also to be had, victorias with spirited little horses; and it was in one of these that I made a tour of the town, a mixture of large palaces, dilapidated houses and miserable mud huts, in which live, promiscuously, beings half-clad, men, women, and children, with their pigs, dogs, goats and hens. Almost all the shops exhibit signs in various languages, where as a rule abominable English rivals impossible French; whilst over the whole city huge bills announce in stirring type the 'Greatest Hypnotiser in the World,' just arrived from Paris!

"The bazaars are large, and one can find in them most of the products of the East. The serene air of the merchants,

seated Turkish fashion, smoking and drinking their coffee, absolutely unconcerned, contrasts strangely with the hawkers on the landing-stage who pursued and worried us.

"The Arab is a wit, without doubt. I was bargaining with one of these for a shawl, for which he had asked four times the value, and we had just arrived at the price which I was willing to give when, seizing a necklace, he wrapped it up quickly in the shawl, and, handing them both, he whispered, 'Here, take, backsheesh!' Then, alluding to the famous Ministerial circular, he added, 'But, sure, not tell Cromer Pasha!'

"Of course there are tombs at Assiout. Where in Egypt are there not? Here they are situated high up on a barren mountain, on the side of which are to be seen, from far off, the gaping holes of various sizes, according to whether they are the tombs of man, or of dog, cat or wolf, animals formerly held sacred at Assiout. Under the blazing rays of the sun we mounted the hill, covered with bleached bones, and arrived at the entrance to the first great tomb. Against the grating a hideous mummy stands erect. One of the keepers, putting his right arm around it and stretching out his left hand, said to us, 'Photograph the two generations . . . five piastres, if you please!' The tombs of Assiout are really not worth the trouble of a visit. They are ordinary caves, in which some holes indicate the places from which the mummies have been taken. In a corner of one of these there is a heap of mummy cloths, and the Dragoman offers us pieces as a souvenir. 'Extraordinary,' he says, 'how this stuff has been preserved for ages.' Outside, one of the party, observing a bundle of filthy rags, and drawing the guide's attention to them, asked, 'And that, is that also mummy-cloth?' To which the other glibly answered, 'Oh no, that is filth that comes from Birmingham!'

"In one of the caves one can just perceive on the walls some designs, almost obliterated, and the Dragoman, with his voice of a child reciting a lesson, tells us, 'These are the women of the harem who are inhaling the perfume of the lotus.' 'Vieux farceur, va!' And a little further on he cries: 'That, that is the dead man with his mother behind him . . . proof that he respected his mother and was proud to be her son. The ancient Egyptians respected their women . . . the

modern Egyptians also do so . . . only, they have got a bad reputation, that is all!' 'Yes, my friend,' I could not help saying to myself, 'there is no smoke without fire.'

"We descended by another path and came to the City of the Dead, the great Arab cemetery, lying white beneath the sky, with its thousands of tombs covered with graceful domes. From a distance the scene is a beautiful one; from close by it

Sanderson

ASSIOUT

is less pleasant. Certain graves are open, the bones lie uncovered, and the vultures eye them as they hang aloft.

"I took the opportunity of my short stay at Assiout to pay a visit to the American Mission, which possesses a church, a hospital, and two important colleges for boys and girls. Very warmly received by the Director, Rev. Dr. Alexander, I visited in his charge the well-appointed buildings. Established for half a century in Egypt, these Presbyterian Missions have undoubtedly rendered a great service to civilisation.

"I still continue to think that the results, from a purely religious point of view, are almost nil, although, from a civilising and humanitarian point of view, they are enormous. The

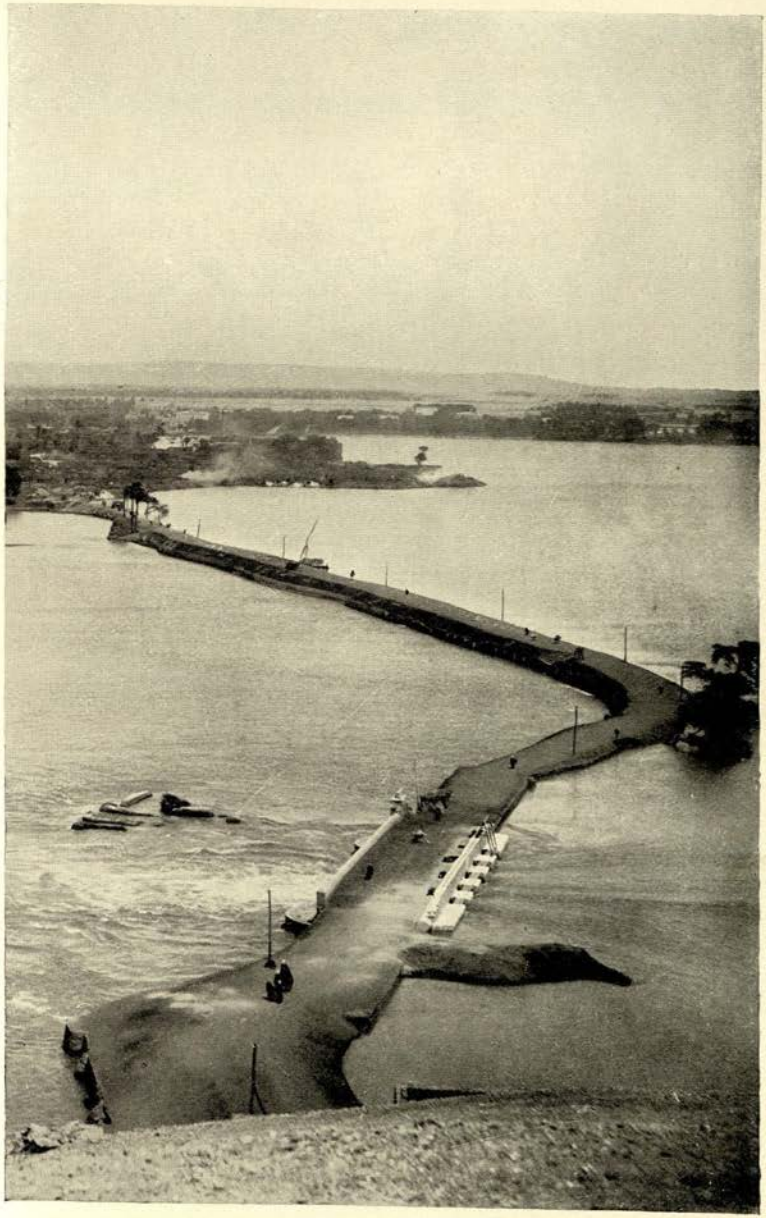
colleges at Cairo and Assiout have each some seven hundred pupils. The girls' school at Cairo has four hundred. Altogether, the different schools belonging to the American Mission in Egypt give an excellent and practical education to 12,387 boys, and 3521 girls.

"At the college in Assiout the course of study lasts six years. On leaving, the graduates become some (the number is very limited) missionaries, others teachers, whilst the great majority return to their villages, where they obtain situations in the post, telegraph, or telephone offices, &c.

"Now these thousands of Orientals who have passed six years of their life in daily contact with their Western teachers contribute in no small degree to better the relations between Mussulmans and Christians. Scarcely twenty years ago it was impossible to speak to a Mohammedan of the Bible; to-day many of them study it, some through curiosity, others with the desire of instruction, and they will willingly discuss questions of religion with Christians. The efforts of the American, French, Austrian, and other missionaries have certainly had the result of rendering intercourse between the natives and foreigners much more frank and friendly. Indirectly, they have had another result. They have taught appreciation of many of our ideas and our customs, which lead to a better and healthier life. The men educated at these colleges give up polygamy, and get a better understanding of the meaning of family life, the affectionate ties which bind parents and children together. The women also on leaving the schools know better how to guard their position with modesty and firmness, and their houses are better kept and cleaner.

"'Our endeavour,' Dr. Alexander explained to me, 'is to turn out better men, and not to convert them to Christianity. Certainly we leave no stone unturned to impress on them all that is beautiful and noble in our religion, which comes as a surprise to many of them. If we do not succeed in making them Christians, at least we do succeed in making them our friends, and in inculcating a respect and an appreciation for our ideas.'

"I believe that most of the American missionaries are married, and they seem to me to have an extraordinary number



ASSIOUT BARRAGE

Béato

of children. Is it the climate, or because, as I believe is the case, the stipend is increased with each new arrival? Anyway, if the missionaries do have abundant offspring, they are only following, but in a more moral fashion, in the path of their predecessors, the first monks of Rome, who entered Egypt in the reign of Theodosius. They were knowing fellows, these monks, and believed firmly in the divine command to 'go forth, increase, multiply and replenish the earth.'

"At Assiout the tourist is shown a small lake whose fame

David Gardiner

CALM DAY ON THE NILE

has been sung in ancient days by many poets, and whose miraculous waters 'made fertile the women who bathed therein.' But these ancient writers have failed to give an explanation of the miracle; not so my Dragoman, who thus delivered himself: 'At that time,' he said, 'there were many monks living in the caves at the foot of the mountain. These holy men were consulted on all things, and when a woman was barren what more natural than that she should seek the monks to find a remedy? These sly fellows, they recommended a bath in the lake, and took care that they should be having their own dip at the same time. Ah! they were merry bucks these monks, and sterility had little chance whilst they were about!'

And a strong inclination came to me to say, 'And what about the Dragomans!'"

"*December* 26.

"Yesterday was Christmas Day, and the *Rameses* was *en fête!* The two decks were covered with flowers, plants and wreaths, and the company offered the passengers a monster dinner, excellently served. We had toasts and speeches; but it is certainly a great pity that my American lady, of whom I have already spoken, had not raised her voice, so that the

TEMPLE OF DENDERAH

general public might have had the benefit of the story which she was telling a lady at her side, and which I could not but overhear. I give only one extract: 'Madame B., one of my greatest friends. When I return to Cairo she is going to take me to see the harems; all the doors are open to her, you know; she has married a Pasha, a very wealthy and influential man, *whose grandfather was a eunuch to the Khedive'!*

"This morning early we landed at Keneh (420 miles from Cairo). Donkeys were awaiting us, and we set off at a gallop across country to visit the famous temple of Denderah, dedicated by the ancient Egyptians to the goddess Athor. It was a delicious ride in the cool of the morning over the land just beginning to catch the first rays of the sun. Hundreds of men

and women were at work in the fields, cutting the Egyptian maize, whose tall stems, twelve to fifteen feet high, bent under the weight of a huge pear-shaped head, in no way like the Indian plant. Numbers of donkeys heavily loaded ran to and fro betwixt the fields and the boats moored to the banks. All of them seemed happyand contented. What a change for the peasant between yesterday and to-day! Not only is he no longer oppressed and down-trodden, but he is able even to borrow money, at a small rate of interest, to free himself from the grip of the usurers. With the awful misery which formerly existed in Egypt, there were very few peasants who had not fallen into the hands of the Greek and Armenian money-lenders—another plague of Egypt which has now passed away.

"When the Government authorised the Cassel-Suarès group to establish the National Bank it was with the condition attached that a certain sum should be set apart each year for loans to the peasants at 9 per cent., a small rate compared with that charged by the money-lenders. Notwithstanding the suspiciousness of the fellaheen, this move met with great success, and the National Bank then decided to create 'The Agricultural Bank,' whose object is to come to the aid of peasants who are in need of money, either to pay off the money-lenders, or in hypothecation of their crops. Admirably managed by Mr. G. Scott Dalgish, this bank has been a great success. The amount of business done per annum is now £112,000, lent out at 9 per cent., and the total amount advanced £840,000. There is no mistake as to the great good done by this institution. The Founder's shares of a nominal value of £5 are now worth £800.

"Speaking of the poorer class, I should like to say a word in regard to a philanthropic work which is due to the generosity of Sir Ernest Cassel. As is well known, eye diseases attack an enormous number of Egyptians. It is a veritable scourge, which deprives thousands of any possibility of gaining a living. Sir E. Cassel, two or three years ago, placed at Lord Cromer's disposal a sum of £40,000, the interest on which is employed in the treatment of those who suffer from these diseases. Sir Horace Pinching, Director of the Sanitary Service, advised the equipping of travelling dispensaries, which should

move from town to town and village to village, carrying succour to those in need. Two of these were organised, with Drs. MacCallan and Miller in charge. Thousands of unfortunate sufferers have already been treated or operated on without charge; and the success of the scheme has been so great that the authorities would not hesitate to increase the number of dispensaries, if only funds were forthcoming.

"The temple of Denderah is one of the most interesting in Upper Egypt. These ruins, wonderfully preserved, are superb and magnificent, and one cannot but stand in awe before the colossal work which they represent. I shall stop here without attempting to describe them; for has not Mariette himself written in his 'Description générale de Dendérah,' 'It would take several years to copy all this vast mass, and twenty volumes to describe it'? Evidently my stock-in-trade is insufficient for such a task, and I can only console myself in listening to the lamentations of a lady on board who is complaining of the want of a maid. 'And it is terrible for me,' she said, 'because all my dresses button or hook or lace down the back. I can't do it myself, so of course I've got to call the Arab, and his cold clammy finger wanders continually all over my back, and gives me the most horrible feelings!' Poor lady, I know these Arabs by reputation and I can understand."

KARNAC

Béato

CHAPTER XIII

LUXOR, KARNAC, AND THE TOMBS OF THE KINGS

Ancient Thebes—A visit to the temple of Karnac with M. Legrain—To the tombs of the kings with M. Quibbell—A new discovery—The tomb of Queen Tia discovered by Theodore M. Davis, Esq.—An unpublished lecture by M. Maspéro.

"Look over there," a gentle voice said to me, "do you see these heaps of masonry? These are the ancient walls of Thebes! When I was a boy, and read that chariots drawn by many pairs of horses galloped on these walls, and met and passed and overtook each other, I looked at the walls of our villa in the suburbs of Paris half a yard thick, and I said to myself, 'That is a joke.'"

So said to me M. Legrain, that charming, learned and distinguished Egyptologist, who, for ten years, has worked with such intelligence and will at the reconstruction of the famous temples of Karnac.

"But," he continued, "to-day I believe in these famous walls, for, centuries after, I can still drive my little carriage on their ruins."

I could not help asking myself which of the two one should most admire—the Ancients who created such marvels, or the Moderns, like M. Legrain, who devote the best part of their lives to bringing them to light? One must visit Luxor, the

ancient Thebes, and the temples of Karnac to obtain an idea of the creative power of the ancient Egyptians, as well as of the moral strength and patience of the man who, little by little, gradually rebuilds what was perhaps the greatest temple in the world.

If Mariette considered that it would require twenty volumes to describe the temple of Denderah, how many would he have required to give a just idea of Karnac? They are to-day the most wonderful ruins in Egypt, as, in the time of their full splendour, they were one of the wonders of the universe. Picture to yourself a space of about 900,000 square yards, which, during more than two thousand years, was the sacred place where Egypt, her sovereigns, and her people, came to pour out their treasures on the altars of their gods! Temples, full of statues in gold and ivory studded with precious stones, obelisks of granite cut from a solid block, taken from the quarries of Assouan, hundreds of miles of walls covered with bas-reliefs and paintings, innumerable immense columns carved from base to summit, avenues lined with mysterious sphinx. . . . Imagine all this and a thousand times more, and still you will fail to realise what Karnac was forty centuries ago.

In the middle of this temple you will find a hall so vast that St. Paul's could easily be placed within. It is the hall in which a veritable forest of enormous sculptured columns raise towards heaven their lofty capitals. In the centre there rise twelve, having a height of close on 60 ft., and a circumference of 34 ft., and at the sides one hundred and twenty-two, measuring 37 ft. by 28 ft. It is a superb and wondrous sight.

Since the day when Cambyses destroyed Thebes, the ruins of Karnac became gradually covered over with sand, earth, and rubbish, and they had completely disappeared, until the day when the Egyptologists commenced their excavations. Then when they had cleared the avenue of the Sphinx and the great hall, the enormous sculptured columns began to give way, and later, in 1899, eleven of them came down with a terrible crash. The foundations, sapped by the change in the level of the Nile which runs close by, were no longer sufficiently solid. The disaster seemed irreparable; but M. Legrain was there, and vowed that, cost what it might,

these columns, prostrate and broken, should once more be set up, and set up they now are.

"How in all the earth did you manage it?" I asked.

"Well," he replied, with his charming smile, "it was really the simplest thing imaginable, only it took a long time and a great deal of labour. First the fragments of the columns were gathered, numbered, and stored. This done, we strengthened the foundations, and when these were ready we took the pieces of column one by one, and set them up. After-

Béato

KARNAC, PYLONE OF PTOLEMY

wards, we had to pull down those columns, which threatened to collapse, and restore the foundations. It was really nothing more difficult than that."

Wondering, I looked on this man who, for ten years, has combined the *rôles* of mason, engineer, carpenter, architect, and archæologist; then, raising my eyes towards these enormous piles of stones, I asked what power could have raised them to such a height.

"That also was very easy, and, besides, we used no mechanical means, no mechanical power. We simply did what very

probably the ancient Egyptians themselves did . . . we used earth."

" . . . ? "

" Certainly, earth. As the column or the wall continued to rise, so we raised the earth round it. We brought earth, more earth, always earth, until slowly but surely we created a gradual incline, over which stout ropes and strong arms were sufficient to move the blocks into their places. Thus we moved sections weighing fifty tons, without the slightest accident. As to the earth, this immense hall has been filled and emptied three times during the last year. The task of bringing it or taking it away is performed by hundreds of children, to whom we pay $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ a day ; the men receive $5d.$ When three children of one family are each earning $3\frac{1}{2}d.$, the father retires from business ! "

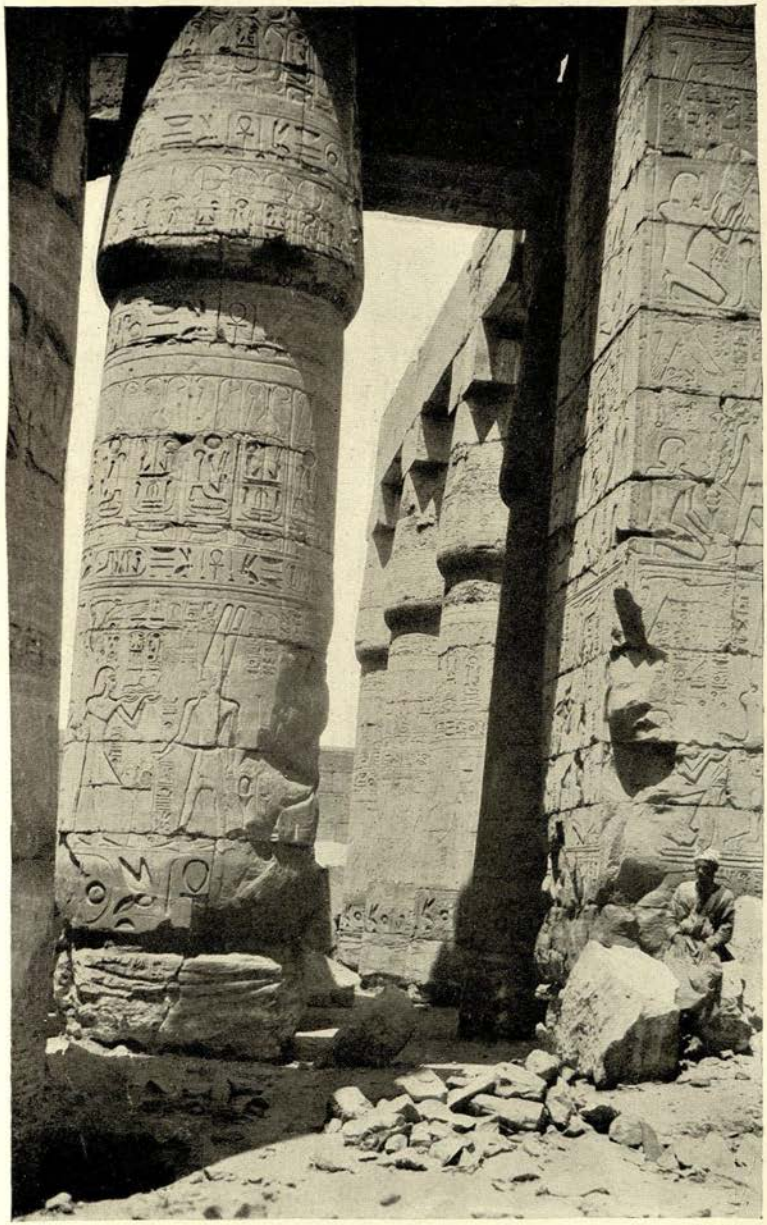
" But all this earth, where does it come from ? "

" Ah ! there you touch on an interesting point. We take it from those parts of Karnac which have not yet been laid bare, and thus we kill two birds with one stone, for we find in the course of our excavations numbers of small objects which we sell, and the income from which helps us on with our work. Come with me, and I shall show you a hiding-place from which we have already taken 698 figures in granite, chalk, alabaster, *racine d'émeraude*, petrified wood, &c., and 12,000 other statues and statuettes in bronze."

I followed M. Legrain, who led me to the opening of an immense hole, at the bottom of which some naked men dabbled and dug in the mud and water. This was the famous hiding-place, but at the depth to which it has now attained it has become full of water, and the work in consequence much harder. Further on I had a look at the excavations. The men with picks loosened the earth and filled the baskets, which were then carried off by squads of children, running and singing, towards the place where the columns were in course of erection.

Historians have always been of the opinion that Thebes and Karnac date from the same time, but it seems that this is not so.

" In fact," said M. Legrain to me, " we have now discovered under the foundations of Karnac the ruins of a temple much older, and which dates back to B.C. 6000 or 5000. It was



Béato

GREAT COLUMNS AT KARNAC

evidently a temple of great importance, and we found on its stones sculptures of the greatest beauty. For instance, look at this small piece of bas-relief."

And the Director of Karnac showed me one of the most exquisite little bits of carving which I have ever seen. It was the representation of a charming head, of flowers, and a small hen beautifully modelled.

"We label all that," continued M. Legrain, "and shall endeavour to reconstruct this underground temple, as we are doing Karnac. Last year, we discovered in that corner down there a small temple, dedicated to an old and awful goddess, who, it seems, was in the habit of eating children. I have managed to put it together; come inside and see, it is rather striking."

There, in fact, in the centre of a small temple, stood a hideous image, lit up in fantastic fashion.

"The Arabs are horribly afraid of it," continued M. Legrain, "and not one of my men will enter unless I am here. They are only big children, and believe thoroughly in fairy tales and ghosts. One of my workmen declares that each time he passes the cemetery, he is beaten by awful beings without heads, and whose bodies vomit forth fire, and the others believe him! There is also a legend of a boat which glided over the sacred lake, and they declare that I shall yet find it."

It is hardly to be wondered at that the poor Arabs regard their Director, the only European amongst them, as a being slightly out of the ordinary. It is only necessary for him to point to a place for things to be discovered there the existence of which no one had suspected. Last year, on returning from his holidays, M. Legrain said to one of his foremen, "Look round about here, there ought to be a staircase," and the staircase was found.

"Yes," said M. Legrain, "I had discovered the existence of this staircase in some old documents in the Louvre!"

We had reached, at this moment, a superb obelisk, the letters of which, graven in gold, informed us that it had been erected by Queen Makeré; that the huge task of cutting the single block from the quarry at Assouan, of bringing it to Thebes (it weighs about 1800 tons), of carving the characters, and

erecting the stone, occupied seven months ! It is almost certain that, even with modern appliances, it could hardly be done to-day. The Queen, it seems, was quite prepared for the incredulous astonishment of future generations, for, on the obelisk, she declares that she had undertaken the work in order

Dittrich

OBELISKS AT KARNAC

that in time to come people should exclaim : " Is it possible ? What a magnificent work ! "

" Come and see my garden," said M. Legrain ; and following him into a place surrounded with walls, I looked about in vain for flowers.

" No, no," he said. " Don't look on the ground, look on the walls ! "

And there, carved on the stone with wonderful delicacy, I saw every imaginable plant, a complete collection, a veritable " Horticultural Exhibition ! "

It was quite to be expected that all the thieves in Egypt, all the sellers of antiquities, false or stolen, should have been on the look-out for the discoveries made at Karnac, and it is no

light work to supervise all the workmen engaged. Last year some thieves, with the connivance of a few of the watchmen, one night broke through the wall of M. Legrain's study, entered and carried off with them two very valuable statues, which after many wanderings were at last recovered. I would advise travellers strongly to be on their guard against these sellers of antiquities. One of them has a celebrated plan.

Consul at Luxor of a certain country, he invites any rich strangers he may meet to a dinner in true Arab style. At dessert, the door-bell is heard to ring, and the servants announce that some natives have just arrived with some remarkable antiquities discovered that day. They are brought in, and, on the advice of the Consul, the rich foreigners, unable to resist the temptation, buy what really belongs to the host himself.

Karnac, at the height of its magnificence, was connected with the great temple at Luxor by an avenue over a mile long and 100 feet broad lined with Sphinx. It was from this latter temple that the obelisk erected in the Place de la Concorde was obtained, and one exactly similar still remains in the midst of the ruins.

Luxor, in itself an uninteresting town, is, thanks to the proximity of the royal tombs and other ancient monuments, one of the most attractive places in Egypt. The climate in winter is charming, and there are several good hotels. The Grand, belonging to a very obliging Frenchman, M. Pagnon, is the best and most popular. Although not a new building, it is comfortable, and the food and attendance all that one could wish. It is situated in a fine shady garden, a rare thing in Upper Egypt. The situation of Luxor is perfect, and the ancients could not have chosen a finer site for the city, which for several centuries was destined to be the capital of the Emperors of Egypt. Here the Nile flows majestically through a vast and fertile valley, surrounded by high and barren mountains.

According to Deodorus, Thebes was the most ancient city of the Nile Valley, and is believed to have been founded, like Memphis, by Menes B.C. 4400. Homer has sung its praises, and described to us its greatness and its glory, its 100 gates and 20,000 chariots of war. This celebrated town stretched

not only on the right side of the Nile, where to-day we find Luxor and the ruins of Karnac, but also on the left bank, where, in the midst of the fertile fields, superb ruins are still to be seen.

The Ramesseum, an immense temple built by Rameses II., the Colossi of Memnon, two extraordinary statues whose heads seem to threaten heaven itself, the famous temple of Medmit Habu, all these are still standing, and are of the greatest interest. Formerly, when Thebes flourished, the Necropolis was on this side of the Nile as well as the houses of the priests, the embalmers, the craftsmen and workmen engaged on the tombs, the buildings containing the sacred animals, the schools and libraries. At the foot of the valley rose the Lybian mountains, whose sides are honeycombed with tombs. On the left, in a small valley, are the tombs of the Queens, whilst on the right, in another valley, bare and narrow, lie those of the Kings. These are to my mind the most interesting and marvellous sights in all Egypt, and I shall never forget the impression left on me by my visit.

Accompanied by Mr. Quibbell, a Scotsman, Inspector-General of Antiquities, and a charming companion, I set off early one morning from the *Rameses*. The day was sunny and the air delicious. Crossing the Nile by sailing-boats we mounted the donkeys which awaited us, and, for nearly an hour, galloped across the fertile country until we reached the entrance to the Valley of the Kings, narrow and hemmed in by barren yellow rocks. The contrast between the land which we had just left, teeming with life, changed in a moment to this road to Death, where not a bird, not an insect, not the shadow of a living creature could be seen, was most striking. This was truly the Gate of Death, the Valley of Nothingness, at the end of which lay the gaping tombs of once powerful Kings who, wishing to pass in peace their last long sleep, had hollowed out, above and below in the side of the barren rock, marvellous caves, carved, painted and chiselled, where their mortal remains might at last rest.

"Oh, Kings! Vanity, vanity, all is vanity! Ye who had ordained to be buried here with thy jewels and precious stones, thine ivories and gilded furnishings; ye did not understand

that the day would come when thy priests who defended the entrance to thy tombs should vanish away, and thy people be destroyed, that thieves should break through to steal, should burst the doors and break down the walls, should pierce

David Gardiner

LANDING-PLACE, LUXOR

even the shell itself, and carry away with them from the sacred precincts of the grave thy royal remains ! "

But so it came to pass. According to M. Maspéro, some 966 years B.C., robbers had become so powerful, and could so easily defy the Government, that they had desecrated several of the royal tombs, until Aauputh, son of Shashank, decided to have all the caves opened, and the coffins with their remains removed to one vast cavern, where, some thirty centuries later, they were destined to be once more brought to light in a strange manner.

It seems that in 1871 an Arab, named Abd er Rasul Ahmad, found by chance the entrance to this cave, and understanding the rich find which it contained determined to profit by it. He announced his discovery to his two brothers and his son

QUEEN TIA'S MUMMY
New Royal Tomb discovered by Mr. Davis

and for several years he and his accomplices sold to tourists objects of great value but small size, which they could easily carry from their hiding-place to their homes. At last, in 1881, the Egyptologists wakened up, and M. Maspéro, at that time Director of the Museum at Cairo, came to Luxor to make inquiries. After difficulties without number, and too long to recount here, the hiding-place was discovered, and the royal mummies took the road to Cairo, where they finally made their appearance at the Museum under glass cases. Two years later the mummy of Queen Mes-Hent Themebu began to emit an odour which was far from being agreeable, and it was found necessary to unswathe her. Soon it was the turn of Queen Nefartari, who after being unrolled completely putrified, and had to be buried. It was then decided to undo all the mummies and air them, and a beginning was made with Rameses II. He was the first of

the Egyptian Sovereigns whose form was revealed to the world, 3200 years after his mummification.

Though emptied of their mortal remains, of the furniture and utensils with which they were adorned, the tombs of the Kings are still of extraordinary interest. The sculptures and the bas-reliefs are admirably preserved, and a number of the paintings, even after so many centuries, are of incredible freshness and vividness.

GOLD MASK OF QUEEN TIA'S MUMMY

Of the fifty and odd royal tombs mentioned by historians, forty-three have, I believe, been discovered, and are to-day open to the public. All are hewn out of the solid rock, and are composed of long passages leading to vast chambers, of which the last, containing the sepulchre, is situated some 300 to 500 feet from the entrance.

To the ancient Egyptians their tomb was not simply a coffin laid in a grave, but a huge apartment, beautifully ornamented and decorated by the greatest painters and sculptors of the time, and in which the dead could walk at his ease and enjoy all the comforts to which he had been accustomed. Thus we find on the walls and on the pillars scenes, wonderfully depicted, of the life which he had led, and the future life as he imagined it to be.

Mr. Quibbell conducted me first of all to the tomb of Meremptah discovered only a few months ago, and which had not yet been opened to the public. The passages and ante-chambers were lighted by electricity, which enabled one to admire all the details; but the sepulchre itself, the sanctuary, was, when we entered, in complete darkness. Suddenly the sombre cave was filled with light, and, under the brilliant glare of the electric lamps, I saw before me an immense and beautiful granite figure of tender grey colour, lying on its back, with hands crossed on its breast. The effect produced by this wonderful carving of the dead cut on the cover of his coffin, is unforgettable.

BLUE ENAMELLED AND GOLD COFFER WITH NAME OF KING AMENHOTEP III (QUEEN TIA'S TOMB)

For me, however, of all the tombs which I saw, that which impressed me most was of Amenhotep., probably because it was the only one in which the mummy still remained. In the middle of the sanctuary is a superb and enormous coffin of red marble, the covering of which has been removed, and in which rests the corpse. A part of the bands which enwound it has been undone, and the head, the neck and the shoulders appear black and dry. It is impossible to describe the effect of the sight of this once powerful monarch, who, 3500 years after his death, reposes, so small, so withered, under the rays of the Edison lamps. Mockery of human desires! After piercing the very bowels of the mountain, where he believed that, inaccessible and still, he would sleep his eternal sleep, he is to-day exposed to the gaze of thousands of curious tourists.

A short time after my leaving Luxor, another royal tomb was discovered by Mr. Theodore Davis, an American, who is also a distinguished Egyptologist, and who passes his winters in archæological research. One can easily imagine his joy

when, after his long, difficult and costly researches, he at last saw his efforts crowned with success, and a royal tomb lay open before him.

If I was unlucky to leave Luxor before this new discovery I had, at least, the good fortune to hear, a short time after, the lecture given on the subject by M. Maspéro. With the greatest simplicity, in a clear and easy style, with a soft and winning voice, the Director of the Museum explained to us that this was the tomb of Queen Tia, wife of Amenhotep III., who lived B.C. 1500. M. Maspéro rendered well-merited praise to the rich foreigners who, like Mr. Davis, with their time and their money, lend aid to his Department, then he continued :

A CHAIR FOUND IN QUEEN TIA'S TOMB

"The excavations made by Mr. Davis took place in a corner of the Valley of the Kings, where the majority of Egyptologists did not consider that anything interesting would be found. Destiny decreed that just there Mr. Davis should make one of the most interesting and important discoveries of our time. The tomb of Queen Tia was in fact intact, although at the time of the Roman period it had evidently been visited by robbers. But these contented themselves with taking the jewels, and left the rest untouched. We were so keen to see this tomb without altering anything that we penetrated by a little hole just large enough to admit a child, a thief . . . or an archæologist.

"Near the entrance we found a superb scarabee, and some elaborate vases evidently lost *en route* by the thieves, a bad sign, which showed us that the tomb had been opened. Great was our

joy therefore when we discovered that the sanctuary was intact, and full of a thousand objects which recalled the past. On the brick wall which had until to-day separated it from the world, we could still see the marks of muddy hands—hands of men, now for centuries dead, who had sealed it up, as they thought, for eternity. The dead centuries rose up before us as though alive. On the middle of the coffin a pink cushion lay carelessly thrown; at the side was a chair of modern appearance, rather in the Empire style, yet with I know not what of Egyptian. Further away was a gilded arm-chair with straight legs, which recalled the style of Louis XVI., and, facing it, yet another quite Egyptian. Here too was a chariot, covered with leaf-gold, complete with its wheels, pole and yoke. Here also a complete suite of furniture, large chests of black wood, and seventy-two jars containing offerings and provisions, ducks, haunches of venison, meat dried or mummified, bread, wheat, and in others traces of the wine and perfumes which they had contained. One large vase was overturned by accident, and from it came a thick yellowish matter, honey, and strange to say, at that very moment, we saw, alighting on it, a bee which had entered from without. At the side were objects of gold, ivory, silver, not to mention an enormous bunch of onions!"

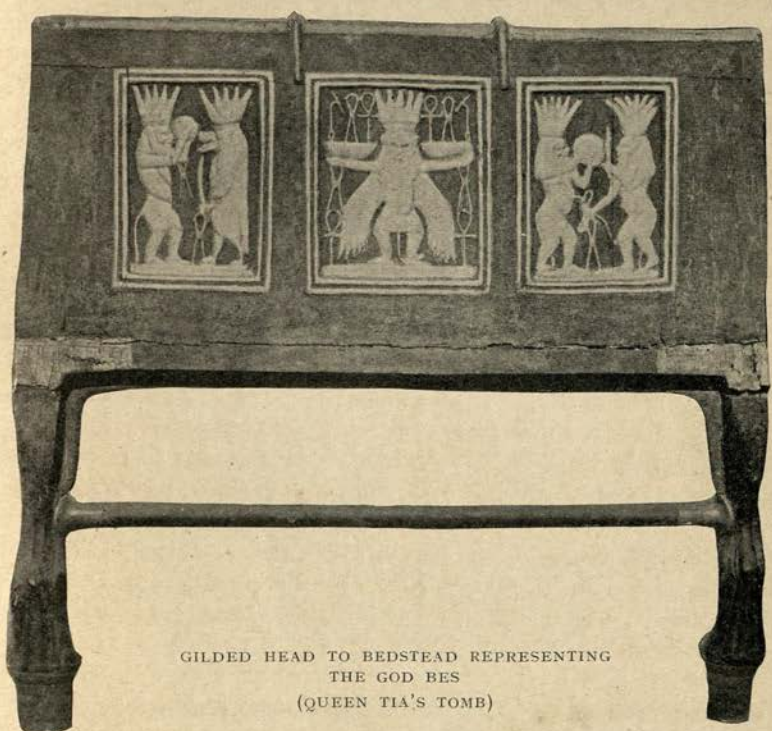
Then M. Maspéro proceeded to give us some charming details of the life led by these ancient Egyptians in general, and Queen Tia in particular, who, it would seem, was a remarkable woman.

* * * * * *

I have tried my very best to obtain a photograph of M. Maspéro: the place for one in a book on Egypt was naturally marked off, but, alas, I have only succeeded in obtaining part of the head of the Director of Antiquities. To my first request for his portrait, M. Maspéro replied: "I regret I cannot satisfy you. My last photograph was taken in 1883. Since then I have never been taken except by a fluke, in accidental groups or at the side of a monument in order to give an idea of its size. In these I usually measure about one-eighth of an inch. I'm afraid that would hardly do for you."

Evidently not. M. Maspéro is not a giant, but really one-

eighth of an inch is a trifle small. One would need a magnifying glass to find him in the middle of the page! Being an obstinate person, I returned to the charge, and begged M. Maspéro to allow Dittrich of Cairo to photograph him. His reply is as follows. I give it as typical of the man :



GILDED HEAD TO BEDSTEAD REPRESENTING THE GOD BES (QUEEN TIA'S TOMB)

"CAIRO, *July* 3, 1905.

"DEAR SIR,—If Dittrich photographed me for you, to-morrow I should be for sale at all the photographers in Cairo. I have found a copy of a photograph which X. took of me at Karnac this winter. The likeness is a good one, but the picture has been badly balanced, and one side of my head is wanting. Your photographer can easily put that right. The portrait is not beautiful, but then, neither am I, and it

is more natural than if I had been taken by a professional photographer.

"Yours very sincerely,

"G. MASPERO."

Alas! dear Monsieur Maspéro, even the most talented photographer cannot put in pieces of a head, especially when the pieces are lacking, and he has not even seen his subject. I prefer not to publish your portrait with the half head lacking, rather than chance having added a lump which, in the eyes of a phrenologist, would turn the great Egyptologist into something unlooked-for and terrible!

Al Vista

ASSOUAN AND THE CATARACT HOTEL

CHAPTER XIV

ASSOUAN

The First Cataract—Society—The famous reservoir which gives water and wealth to Egypt—Is it strong enough ?—Possible devastation of the entire Valley of the Nile—Sir William Wilcox and the pet ideas of a great engineer—The future schemes of Sir William Garstin—Is Philæ, the most graceful monument in Egypt, doomed to certain oblivion ?

ALTHOUGH the distance separating Luxor from Assouan is only 130 miles, the trains take no less than eight hours to do the journey over the narrow-gauge track, and through a country where King Dust holds his sway unchallenged.

I returned from Assouan to Cairo by rail, and I do not think I ever swallowed so much dust as between the first-named station and Luxor. On the contrary, between Cairo and Luxor one has the *train-de-luxe* of the International Sleeping Car Company, which is most comfortable. It is one of the best trains I know. Leaving Cairo in the evening it arrives at Luxor the next morning. There is an excellent dining-car attached, and the sleepers are first-rate. I believe that the widening of the track between Luxor and Assouan has already been begun, and that in this coming winter, or at latest by the next, one will be able to travel comfortably to the latter town.

Naturally, I did the journey between Luxor and Assouan on board the *Rameses*, which, after having given us three days to visit the ruins of Thebes, continued her voyage in perfect weather, the weather which gives to Upper Egypt a delicious springtime in the midst of winter. Whilst we were basking in the warm sunshine, telegrams advised us that the whole of Europe was shivering, that the Riviera was covered with snow, and that even Algiers had seen the white flakes.

David Gardiner

SHÂDÛFS

The Nile seemed to us wonderfully busy. Large numbers of boats ascended and descended; and on the banks, every few yards, men, clad simply with a piece of cloth round the loins, worked without a pause in raising the water by means of ancient shâdûfs. Who would believe that these poor fellows manage to raise about 8000 gallons in a day? It is true that they work from sunrise to sunset . . . for 5*d*. per diem.

Between Luxor and Assouan, Cook's large boats do the distance in two days, with stops at Esneh, Edfu and Kom Ombo. The first of these places is a town of some importance,

with large houses, streets swarming with people, and good bazaars and markets. The temple is only partially excavated, and one hall alone is visited by tourists.

At Edfu, however, there is an immense temple which was begun in the reign of Ptolemy III., B.C. 237, and which took no less than 180 years 3 months and 14 days to build. Completely covered over with sand, earth, and rubbish, on which

David Gardiner

TEMPLE OF KOM OMBO

huts and stables had been built, it was discovered and brought to light by Mariette.

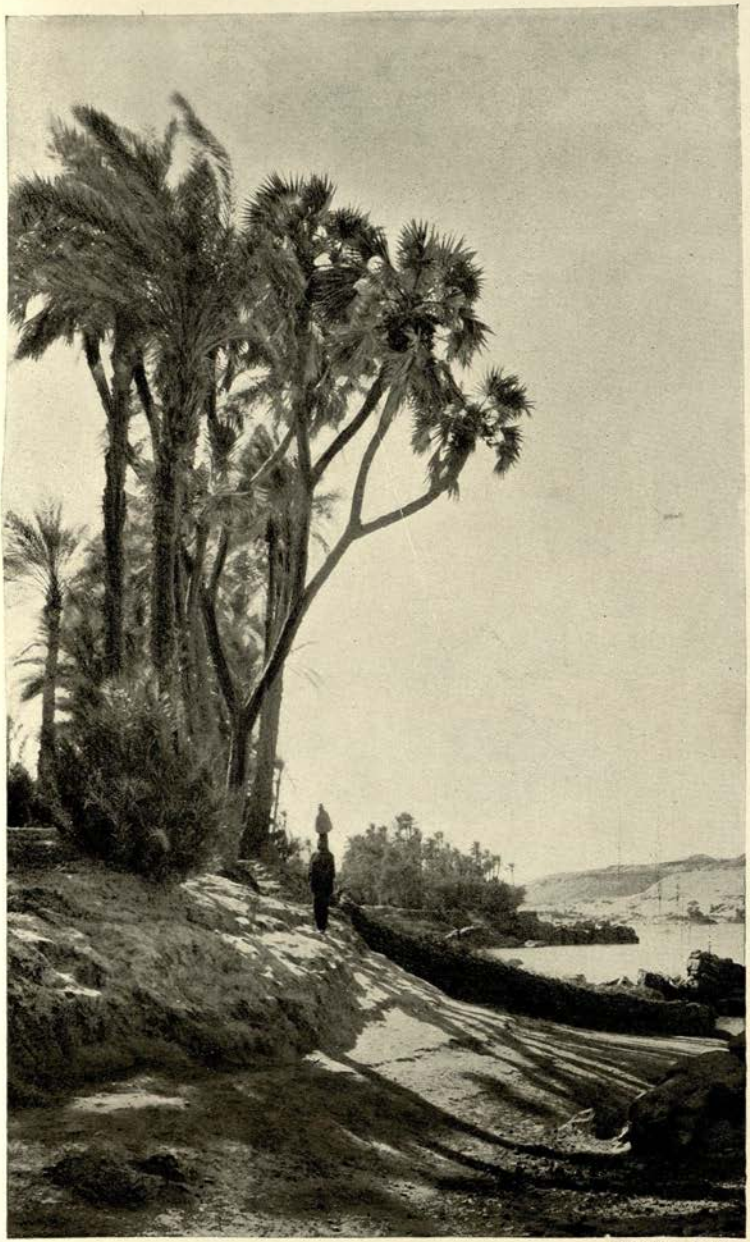
The sculptures of the temple of Edfu are very interesting, and some of them were to me inexplicable. For instance, on the bas-reliefs which we saw there, as also in those we visited next day at Kom Ombo, were men, in profile, with a breast like that of a woman, with this difference, that in the case of the sculptures representing the female the breast was hanging, long and slack, whereas that of the male was straight and firm. According to our Dragoman this male with the extraordinary breast was symbolic of the Nile, and the breast the symbol of fertility.

I must admit that if these ancient Egyptian carvings faithfully represent the ladies of the time, they left something to be desired. Arms and legs like drum-sticks, immensely

large shoulders, and no hips. That is a pretty picture of feminine beauty! I have my suspicions that the Egyptian sculptors of the period had some reason for wishing to keep us in ignorance of the true form of their womenfolk. It is likely enough though that the number of those able to make a pleasant impression without the aid of the dressmakers' art was, as is the case to-day, extremely limited. In spite of all that these sly dogs, the poets, ancient and modern, have told us on the subject, and the efforts of painters and sculptors who show us the exceptions, I thank my stars that I live in an age when women no longer go unclothed, but when they allow artists like Doucet and Redfern to cover with their art all their imperfections. When I saw, as I did in the Sudan, negresses exhibiting their revolting nakedness, I pictured to myself with dismay the sight of a Paris or a London where all the women without exception, young and old, thin and fat, long or short, walked the earth as their Creator had made them, exposing to our horrified eyes their angles, or their lack of them. We have on board the *Rameses* a superb specimen of the latter type, and the beds being somewhat narrow, she has to be wedged in each evening . . . she lies there through the night, unable to move, and in the morning her husband, with the aid of the Arab, puts her on her feet again. She insists on mounting a donkey straddle, when the poor animal completely disappears beneath the mountain of flesh, which is, I may mention, surmounted by a huge hat, trimmed with a bird with impossible waving plumage. Well, even so, I prefer her thus to *au naturel*. And then it gives her husband reason for congratulating himself that he has only one wife! I know an Englishman who was in the habit of travelling about with his four sisters, all very plain looking, and who only ceased to do so when one day a donkey boy, at Assouan, said to him:

"Three of your wives have just gone out. I have not yet seen the fourth!"

The temple of Kom Ombo, where the boats only stop for one hour, is full of interesting sculpture, where the women without hips and the men with breasts rival the beings of double sex who offer dishes, covered with all manner of things, to personages, kings or gods, who receive them with open hands.



David Gardiner

ELEPHANTINE ISLAND

Ah! that open hand! . . . one sees it throughout Egypt, in the streets as well as in the temples. Backsheesh was evidently popular with the Pharaohs themselves.

Some yards away from the ruins of Kom Ombo rises a colossal brick chimney, surrounded by hideous modern buildings, indicating the site of the new enterprise launched by the group of capitalists at the head of which are Messrs. Cassel and Suarès. No one had ever thought of buying the land situated round Kom Ombo, because, considering its high elevation above the Nile, it was thought impossible to irrigate it. To-day, however, there are steam-pumps of such great power that raising water to a height of 45 feet is mere child's play. The Kom Ombo Co. purchased from the Government 30,000 feddans (about 27,250 acres) for four shillings a feddan (4400 square yards), the agreement being that the company would spend all the money necessary to irrigate these lands. On the other hand the Government agreed not to levy any taxes during a period of five years, and to sell 35,000 feddans more to the company whenever this one asked them. Very remarkable works have been executed, which so far have cost £300,000, and it is anticipated that £300,000 more will have to be expended before the land yields. The irrigated feddan would therefore come to £20, and there are good reasons to believe that it will be worth £40 or more a feddan within a few years. As to the Government, it will receive some £30,000 from yearly taxes when the 65,000 feddans have become productive.

At last, twelve days after leaving Cairo, the *Rameses* has arrived at Assouan, the celebrated town situated at the First Cataract of the Nile. From all time Assouan and the Elephantine Island opposite it have been considered amongst the most important and interesting places in Egypt. It is the frontier town, the extreme south, where the Egyptians, Persians, Romans, and finally the Anglo-Egyptians have established garrisons. Beyond the cataract lies Nubia, and beyond Nubia the Sudan, immense and even now mysterious.

To-day Assouan is a modern and important town, which in winter is full not only with the tourists whom boats and trains daily disgorge, but with a large number of foreigners, who, in

ever-increasing numbers, come here to spend the winter. The climate has a reputation rather overdone. Very dry, warm and sunny, rain and fog are almost unknown; but it must be remembered that this great dryness of the air makes the climate enervating, and also that a cold piercing wind sometimes makes itself felt. The danger for delicate persons is great. In the sun, and sheltered from the wind, one can "bake" very

David Gardiner

A SHEIK'S TOMB IN THE DESERT, NEAR ASSOUAN

comfortably in the month of January; but when the wind blows hard, it pierces through one's clothes, and makes one shiver. It is not an uncommon thing to see people with flannel suits and sun-helmets, armed with a parasol, and carrying an overcoat and a thick rug. With a little intelligent care one can avoid a chill, but it cannot too often be repeated that even the strongest ought to take the greatest precautions.

With these disadvantages, I am ready to admit that Assouan is, in winter, an ideal spot for those who wish to lead an out-door life. Whether one chooses to pass the day sailing

on the Nile, visiting the ins and outs of the Elephantine Island and Philoe, or in playing tennis, croquet, or golf, in riding over the Desert either on donkey or camel, there is no need to weary, and every moment in the life-giving sunshine can be enjoyed.

At Assouan there are three excellent hotels, two of which are large modern houses. The "Cataract," belonging to Cook, is admirably looked after by M. Pagnon (proprietor of the hotels at Luxor). It is ideally situated on rising ground, and facing south. The salons, halls, terraces, libraries, billiard-room, &c., are perfectly furnished, and the immense Moorish dining-room is delicious. It is easy to understand the enormous difficulties which have to be overcome to conduct really well such a place, and to offer daily, at six hundred miles from Cairo, a varied and excellent menu worthy of any of the big Paris restaurants, to hundreds of guests with appetites whetted by an open-air life. It is really extraordinary to find on the frontiers of Nubia, at a reasonable price, all the comforts and luxuries to which we are accustomed, and for which we are willing to pay a large price, at Ostend, Baden-Baden, Nice, or Monte Carlo.

On the Elephantine Island, in the midst of a charming garden, there is another palatial building, the "Savoy Hotel," belonging to the Anglo-American Company, and which enjoys equal popularity with the "Cataract."

Finally, in the town itself, and near the landing-stage, is the "Grand Hotel d'Assouan," belonging to M. Pagnon, less pretentious than the others, less costly, but all the same very comfortable. Just as in Cairo, the hotels are the centre of all that is going on. During the day there are sports of all sorts, and in the evenings, concerts, balls, and bridge-parties.

From time to time gymkanas, donkey and camel races, paper-chases, &c., are held, when ladies, gentlemen, children, young and old, take part with extraordinary enthusiasm.

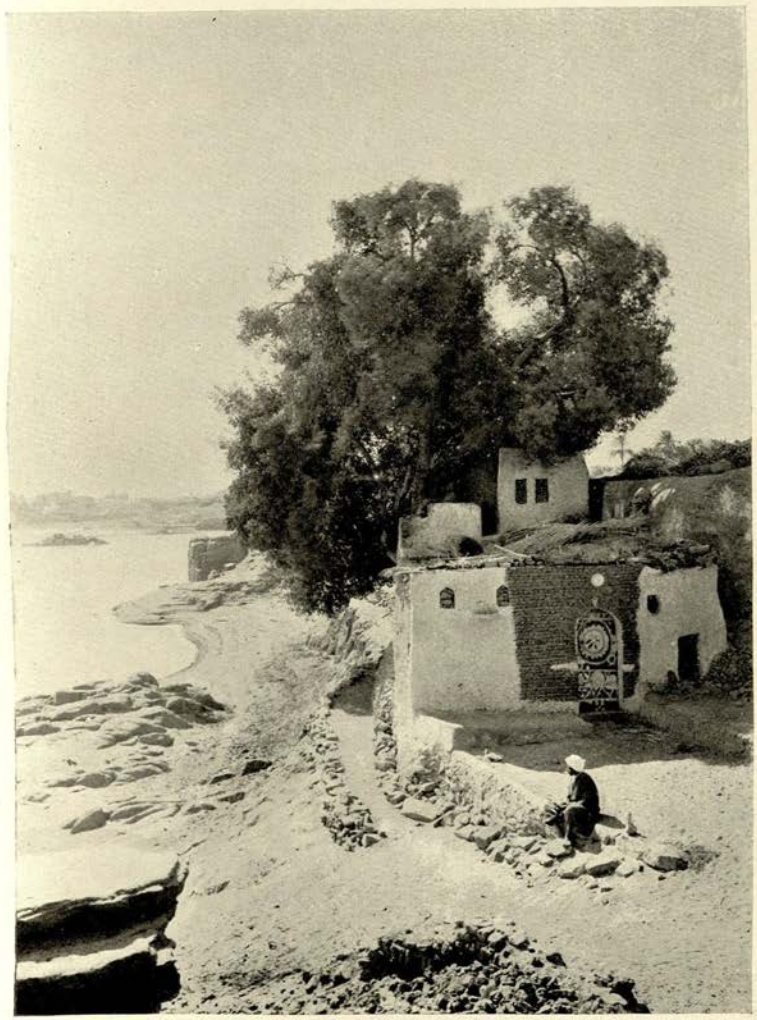
One afternoon, when writing in my room, with wide open windows, I heard suddenly a fearful uproar, and rushing on to my balcony I witnessed a spectacle not to be forgotten. Hundreds of donkeys arrived at the gallop, donkeys of every colour and size, mounted by the most varied types of riders that one could meet with under the same sky. Every one had

come for a paper-chase, the start and finish of which were to take place at the "Cataract." Never in my life have I seen such an extraordinary collection of men of all ages, their heads covered with sun-helmets, panamas, straw and felt hats, their legs encased in putties, gaiters, and riding-boots of extraordinary shape; the women adorned with strange head-dresses, from which streamed immense veils, with short skirts, excellent for walking but a trifle airy for the saddle. All this host, gathered from the four corners of the world, shouted and gesticulated in all the tongues, and I wondered at the quietness of the donkeys, excellent animals if ever there were.

A little further on, squatted on the sand, their necks outstretched, the camels looked on with the greatest interest at this stirring scene; and when the signal to start was given, and the immense cavalcade careered off with yells and cracking of whips, some of them, furious at being left out in the cold, emitted the most awful groans—and the groaning of a camel is none too musical.

If I am not mistaken, all the Assouan and Luxor hotels have now been formed into a single company, the "Upper Egypt Hotel Company," managed by M. Pagnon, and the two large hotel owners in Cairo, Messrs. Nungovich and Baehler. The number of tourists increases so rapidly that the "Cataract" and "Savoy" are both building annexes, which will be composed almost entirely of single rooms. It seems that tourists ask less and less for double rooms. I do not think one need go far for a reason for this state of things. There is no doubt that two people are more comfortable in two communicating rooms, each of which has a bed, a table, a wardrobe, toilet-table, &c., than in a double room; and as the price asked is the same for two single as for one double, the public is not such a fool as to demand the latter.

At Assouan last winter no one wished a double room, even the couples most undoubtedly married, but there was always a rush for the single ones. A Frenchman who was there suffering from some illness of the limbs, and accompanied by a buxom nurse, was put with her into a double room. Every day he lamented the state of things, and said to the Director:



David Gardiner

NUBIAN VILLAGE—ELEPHANTINE ISLAND

"But, Monsieur, it cannot go on. Think of my reputation. . . . I am the father of a family. What will people say when they hear that I have had this young woman sleeping in my room?"

"But, Monsieur," said the Director, "since she dresses

BESHARINS' ENCAMPMENT

you and undresses you, and puts you to bed, what does it matter?"

"Matter!" shouted the Frenchman, "it matters everything!"

"And to think," murmured the Director, glancing towards certain groups, "that there are so many who would willingly change places!"

Assouan is undoubtedly the most picturesque spot in Upper Egypt. On both sides of the Nile, high and rocky mountains,

almost entirely covered with a golden sand of a warm, almost indescribable tint, and topped here and there with ancient ruins, raise against the background of sky their blackened summits.

Between the town and the Elephantine Island, covered with verdure, the Nile flows swiftly, dotted with hundreds of dahabeahs and other craft, the crews of which chant their eternal and monotonous song. A little higher up is the First Cataract, with its rapids, where the water comes roaring down between the rocks.

I have never seen elsewhere more glorious sunsets than at Assouan; but it would require a more gifted pen than mine to describe the wonderful and fantastic colours in which heaven, earth, river and mountains are bathed. Camels are in great request here. Ladies especially seem to like this enormous steed, and it certainly has its attractions, but it is violent exercise, and it is not every one who can stand it.

With camel or donkey the excursions to be had round Assouan are exceedingly interesting. The camp of the Besharins, situated half an hour's ride away, and close to the Arab cemetery, is a favourite one. These Arabs (of the camp, not the cemetery), with long hair and strange faces, live in miserable tents made of matting, and of such primitive construction that they succeed in being picturesque.

Needless to say that at Assouan there are celebrated tombs, as everywhere else in Egypt; and here also are these famous quarries of granite, whence the Egyptians have taken their obelisks, their statues and their sarcophagi. To this day an unfinished obelisk, measuring some ninety feet in length, can still be seen.

At some distance from Assouan, not far from the head of the cataract, is the temple of Philæ, the most graceful and elegant of all Egyptian temples. Situated on the island of the same name, the "Pearl of Egypt" is really in Nubian territory. The natives call it "Gesiret Anas el Wogud," after the hero of one of the chapters of the "Thousand and One Nights," who, in the Egyptian version, there found his bride. The Island of Philæ is in the centre of the space which forms the immense reservoir of Assouan, of which I have already spoken;

and at the time when this is full the entire island, and almost the whole of the beautiful temple, disappears under the muddy waters of the Nile.

The *savants* and archæologists of the entire world rose in arms when the construction of the reservoir was decided upon, and demanded that another site should be chosen. It was, however, impossible to find in the whole Nile Valley another spot equally suitable; and between the graceful temple and the

David Gardiner

KIOSK OF PHILÆ DURING THE FLOOD

works which were to double the agricultural wealth of Egypt, the engineers did not hesitate, and Philæ was sacrificed. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that very important works were executed in order to consolidate this remarkable monument, the Government spending no less than £22,000 in doing so.

The curious thing is that the water which it was presumed would destroy the celebrated temple has probably saved it. In his 1904 report, Lord Cromer remarks that, having visited the works whilst in course of execution, he was struck with the deplorable state of the old foundations, which would shortly have resulted in the collapse of certain parts of the temple.

M. Ed. Naville, some two years ago, wrote thus to the *Journal de Genève*:

"I am one of those who, on many occasions, either in the press or at scientific congresses, protested against the construction of a dam at Assouan. . . . I think now that archæologists have reason to be satisfied. The monument is out of danger for years, and it does not seem that the water has any bad effects on the stone, except perhaps in a few chambers which, having as sole opening a low door, necessarily remain damp, and have become covered with saltpetre. One can even believe, in certain regards, that the temple of Philæ is to-day in better condition than most of the other Egyptian monuments. For some years the great temples have been passing through what I may call a crisis of senile decay. Is it the excavations which are the cause of this? I cannot deny it. It is certain that too often in the haste to bring to light these magnificent remains, sufficient inquiry has not been made as to whether they are strong enough to stand by themselves, and whether they were not in absolute need of the support given them by the mountains of rubbish, or of the villages which had been built midway between the columns. At Philæ the same thing might have happened as with the others. The temple would have sunk gradually; here and there a column would have fallen, then an arch, and it might have been necessary to wait until sufficient funds were available before the foundations could have been strengthened. Now that has been done lastingly; and whilst grateful to the Egyptian Government for the ready way in which they made the pecuniary sacrifice, we also like to think that the protests which we made were not without weight in their decision."

Lastly, in his latest report, M. Maspéro declares: "I am happy to state that the condition of Philæ is quite satisfactory. The sandstone, instead of crumbling away under the influence of the water as had been feared, has consolidated and hardened; it has greater consistence, and in consequence more chance of holding out than before."

One had grounds for hoping then that, in spite of its annual bath, Philæ would endure still for many centuries, and the archæologists were happy; but, alas! their peace has been of short duration, for the engineers have begun to talk of

David Gardiner

PHILÆ BEFORE THE ASSOUAN DAM WAS BUILT

raising the level of the water in the reservoir some twenty feet. That would be the end of Philæ!

The raising of the reservoir is a question of the greatest importance for Egypt, and, ignorant as I am of these matters, I must try and briefly explain the reason. The two great aims of the Ministry of Public Works (at the head of which is his Excellency Fahkry Pasha, an Egyptian of great intelligence, having as Under Secretary Sir William Garstin) are firstly, to increase by the means already mentioned in Chapter IV. the quantity of Nile water, on which the agricultural wealth of Egypt depends, and, secondly, to store at the time of the flood millions of cubic yards of water which, released in the dry season, will render the soil twice as productive as formerly.

Reiser

H.E. FAHKRY PASHA, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS

People at a distance who hear speak of the reservoir of Assouan imagine vaguely a certain huge tank containing a quantity greater or less of water. But that, of course, is hardly correct, and it is exceedingly difficult to describe to those who have not seen it, the immensity of the work. In a word, a colossal barrier, formidable, a veritable mountain of granite, has been constructed across the river, at the head of the First Cataract. The water, arrested by this powerful dam, spreads over the space between the mountains which rise on either side some distance off, thus forming an immense lake, under which the plain and the villages formerly there have completely disappeared. Here and there the tops of some lofty palm-trees appear on the surface of the water: of the island of Philæ

only the tops of the pylons and a few columns can be seen. The dam is pierced with 180 enormous sluices, by which the surplus water is carried off, roaring with a thunderous noise. The quantity of water retained is over one billion cubic yards, and Mr. MacDonald, the distinguished engineer, who is in charge of the works, told me that in evaporation alone they lost one hundred millions of cubic yards of water in each twenty-four hours. One can easily understand the enormous pressure placed on the dam by this vast quantity of water, and the force of resistance required to counteract it.

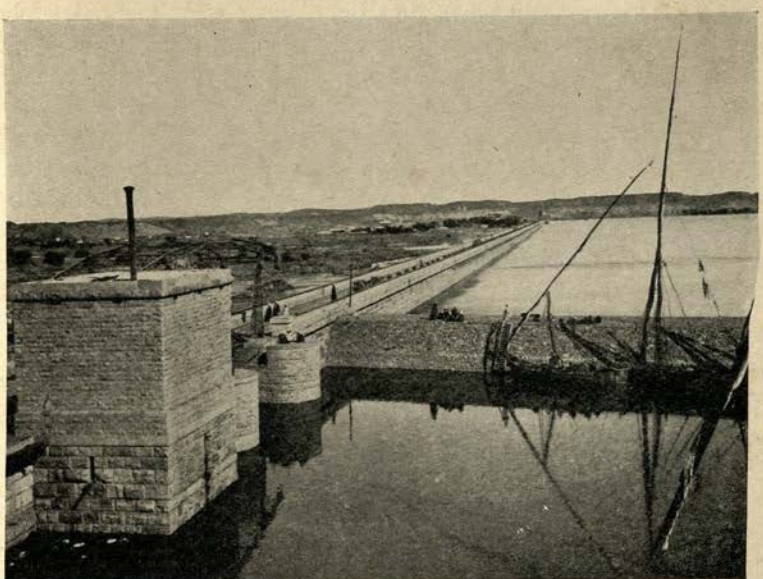
As I said above, the engineers now desire to raise the level by some twenty feet, which would almost double the quantity of water contained. The whole of Egypt is crying out for water, always water. The raising of the dam at Assouan would mean millions added to the wealth of the country.

The well-known engineer, Sir William Wilcox, only last year was crying out loudly for the work to be done. A man of great talent, with the powerful and fertile brain necessary for great enterprises, his motto seems to be, "De l'audace, de l'audace, et au diable les conséquences!" And, treading on his heels, all those who possess land in Egypt, or are speculating in it, demand that the work should be undertaken without delay. But Fahkry Pasha and Sir William Garstin are prudent men, and although themselves in favour of the scheme, which appears, as far as all the data obtainable can prove, to be feasible, they were not inclined to risk anything without having the matter studied on the spot by the greatest authorities on the question, especially as two well-known *savants*, Messrs. L. W. Atcherley and Karl Pearson, have lately expounded theories which completely overturn all those entertained up till now as to the solidity and resisting power of a dam.

After a thorough study of the question it was at last decided to drop the scheme for the present, to continue certain works of consolidation and protection at the base, and to wait two years longer before deciding whether the proposed elevation is possible or not. If then it is thought that it is impossible, a second dam will be erected above Assouan, on some site not yet fixed. The engineers are at present studying the various likely places.

David Gardiner

THE BARRAGE AT ASSOUAN



David Gardiner

LOCK, BARRAGE AT ASSOUAN

Egypt, therefore, must wait three or four years before she obtains a larger quantity of water for her lands. I do not think that this is an evil. Her present prosperity is so great that a period of relative calm in which she can recover from the fever of speculation from which she at present suffers cannot but be an advantage.

In certain circles, the reservoir of Assouan is much criticised, and its solidity placed in doubt. A celebrated archæologist said to me: "It is an error, a terrible error, to have constructed this immense rampart, which, one day or other, will be broken down by the waters. Several smaller dams would have done equally well without running any risks, and the act of barbarism in connection with Philæ would not have been committed. The English engineers will not admit the possibility of constructing a barrier on any other foundation than rock. They therefore chose the actual site because the bed of the Nile at that point is rocky; but the Assouan rock is hard only on the surface, this hardness coming from the action of the water: underneath it is soft, in a way rotten. For two years, under the continual pressure, the rock on which the foundations rest has sunk, and the dam itself has already shifted about eight feet. My opinion is that it will not last, and unless it is decided to abandon it, and create several smaller barriers, the world one of these days will assist at a most fearful cataclysm. Imagine, if you can, what will happen when, the dam giving way, a hundred thousand millions of square yards of water will rush down the Valley of the Nile, carrying with it entire

SIR WILLIAM GARSTIN

Marques Fiorillo

PHILÆ

towns and villages, and completely wiping out the population. That is the danger which Egypt is running. Assouan is threatened by another sword of Damocles. I am, in fact, convinced that the road which leads actually from the reservoir (Shellal) to Assouan is an ancient arm of the Nile. I have studied the land, and I have not the slightest doubt on this subject. I will even add that there are already serious infiltrations on this side. Very well, it is quite possible that in a year of high flood,

TUSKS OF LAST ELEPHANT KILLED BY SIR W. GARSTIN

the Nile, stopped by the dam, will hurl itself into this dry arm of its ancient bed . . . and that will be the end of Assouan, which will be swept by a monster wave which will not leave one stone standing on another."

When I retailed to Sir William Garstin these terrible predictions he quietly shrugged his shoulders, and replied :

" It is useless to say that my own opinion is that the dam is not in the slightest danger ; but here is another opinion, which is worth quite as much as that of your distinguished archæologist. It is a report which has been sent to me by Sir Benjamin Baker, the famous engineer whose authority on these questions

is recognised throughout the world, and from which you can take this passage : ' I leave the dam (after fifteen days' study) with the most absolute confidence that you need not have the slightest fear as to its permanent stability, and that for centuries to come.' "

Last summer, the dam at Assouan was the means of saving Egyptian agriculture from ruin, and the entire country from famine. The Nile flood was in 1905 so late and so low that the crops of cotton and rice would have been lost had it not been for the water stored in the reservoir, which assured such a satisfactory supply for irrigation that the cotton harvest was an excellent one.

Sir William Garstin has lately made a voyage of inquiry in Upper Egypt, the Sudan and the Bahr-el-Gazal. A keen sportsman, he combines the pleasures of the chase with the studies which have made him celebrated. In the course of this trip he had the good luck to kill the largest elephant so far shot in the Soudan. The tusks of this giant are enormous, the left measuring 7 ft. 11 in., and weighing 159½ lb., the right 8 ft. 3 in., and weighing 135½ lb., in all 295 lb. of ivory from a single animal.

One last word on the subject of Philæ. I am assured that an American has offered to buy the temple for £40,000, and to carry it off to Chicago, an offer which naturally has no chance of being accepted. But why not do in Egypt what this enterprising spirit offered to do in America ? I mentioned the matter to M. Maspéro, who first of all shook his head, but finally said : " Give me £40,000 and I will undertake to do it." £40,000 ! Why, one could get that sum easily, and, if I were allowed *carte blanche*, I would undertake, to save Philæ, to collect it in a very short time.

FLOODED PALM GROVE

CHAPTER XV

ASSOUAN TO KHARTOUM

From the First to the Second Cataract—Abu Simbel—The return of the Empress Eugénie—A last pilgrimage—Sovereign and woman—Wadi Halfa to Khartoum by *train de luxe*—The famous baths for travellers in the Desert—How the line was made—Its future—Without it France and Abyssinia might perhaps to-day have been in possession of the sources of the Nile.

One can travel to-day into the heart of the Sudan, to Khartoum or to Omdurman, the town which, only a few years ago, was the capital of the Dervishes, as easily as one can to St. Petersburg or Chicago. I can even say that in winter the voyage from Assouan to Khartoum is one of the most interesting, pleasant, and comfortable journeys which one could undertake. The temperature is delicious, neither too hot nor too cold; rain and damp are unknown, and from morn till eve one can revel in the brilliant sunshine which no cloud ever comes to obscure.

The voyage is divided into two stages: the first by the Nile as far as Wadi Halfa; the second from that town by rail to Khartoum. Three different boat services are at the disposal of the traveller, who has only to make his choice.

Cook have two magnificent steamers, which, with halts at all the most interesting points *en route*, cover the distance

in four days. The *Prince Abbas*, on which I did the journey, is the pleasantest and most comfortable of all the boats on which I sailed in Egypt. I preferred it even to their large boats on the Cairo-Assouan line. The cabins are larger, attendance excellent, and the food superior.

The Anglo-American Nile Company has a similar service equally popular, and, lastly, the Government of the Sudan has some first-rate boats leaving Assouan twice a week, and doing the journey in two days instead of four. They steam day and night, instead of halting in the evening and continuing next morning as the boats of the two companies do, and their one intermediate stopping-place is Abu Simbel, the only really interesting point between the First and Second Cataracts.* Those, therefore, who are pressed for time can, by going from Cairo to Assouan by train, from Assouan to Wadi Halfa by Government steamer, and from Wadi Halfa to Khartoum by *train de luxe*, accomplish the journey in four days and a half.

Cook's boats leave Shellal, near Philoe, in the morning, crossing the lake formed by the reservoir, and entering the Nile at the other end, where it flows between steep banks. The level of the river, raised by the dam, is such that the villages formerly situated on the banks are now entirely covered with water. Here and there palm-trees, evidently planted on more elevated ground, expose their tufted heads, which rest on the water like huge baskets of ferns. The unfortunate Nubians who inhabited these villages have been indemnified by the Government; but what is the small sum of money which has been paid them compared with the home which, generation after generation, was theirs, and to which they were attached by ties so strong?

The Valley of the Nile is at this point much more picturesque than between Cairo and Assouan. Three hours after leaving Philoe, the steamer makes its way between gorges, shut in by barren and wild mountains. Now and then, betwixt stones and steep rocks, one gets a glimpse of an oasis, of a

* I made the return voyage on board one of these Government steamers and was charmed with it. The price of the return ticket is about £13 instead of £20 to £23 charged on the other boats, but the voyage is shorter, four days as against seven.

clump of waving palm-trees. The scenery is magnificent, and, comfortably settled on deck, the passengers admire it at their leisure. Amongst these is the Marquis de Rudini, the celebrated Italian statesman, with charming manners and exceedingly sympathetic, an ideal fellow-traveller. In spite of the years which have whitened his beard, his tall figure is still erect and full of vigour. With his eyeglass fixed, he

Béato

THE SECOND CATARACT OF THE NILE

admires the country, for, alas! there is nothing on board to admire, and we have come to the conclusion that nine-tenths of the ladies who travel are ugly. It is really remarkable the number of plain-looking women in the world. I know that all men are not beautiful, but who minds that?

At sunset we pass a large village built amidst the green fields and clumps of palms, and which the Nile has not yet devoured, but which it assuredly will, should the dam at Assouan be raised. Makhmoud, my black servant, whom so far I have always believed to be a Sudanese, but who turns out

to be a Nubian, rushes up to me crying : " There is my village, that is where my wife and children live ! " I accompany him on to the bridge, whence, with all the force of his lungs, he shouts to the people working in the fields, " Hi ! down there, here I am, Makhmoud ! " In their turn they shout, " There's Makhmoud, there's Makhmoud ! " and from all sides, from men, women and children, there rises a cry of " Makhmoud, Makhmoud ! "

But his wife and children are not there, for his house is far, far up on the hill. He points proudly to it, and to the palm-trees which, he says, belong also to him, and adds : " It is the finest and richest village in all Nubia." He is quite moved, poor devil, and I cannot help asking myself why it is that the white man is always inclined to treat the black so badly. I have had Makhmoud with me for five months, and he has served me with a devotion and honesty which one very rarely meets with nowadays at home.

Shortly after engaging him, having a certain sum in gold, too heavy to carry with me, I hid it amongst my shirts. Some days later, as I was dining in town, I left behind in a drawer several silver coins : on my return, rather late, I found that they had gone. Somewhat scared, I began to look for my bag of gold, but taking out each shirt separately, and shaking it well, I found nothing.

" It is that miserable nigger who has robbed me," I thought.

When Makhmoud appeared next morning I asked him, with a severe look :

" Did you take any money from this drawer ? "

" Yes, sir," he replied calmly, " and a bag of gold from that one, and some scarf pins from the pin-cushion, and sleeve-links out of this box. Very bad. Some one come and steal, and my master say, ' It is Makhmoud ! ' "

" And," I asked rather ashamed, " what have you done with them ? "

He took a key from his pocket, and showing me a trunk, " All shut inside," he said simply.

Makhmoud is black as the ace of spades, but I have discovered that he is quite unconscious of it. After passing his

village, he continued to speak of himself and his belongings, and told me, "My wife white."

I admit I was astonished.

"What? White, do you say?"

"Yes, sir. White, quite white, not *brown* like me!"

Makhmoud brown! It was a delicious idea; and if he calls ebony black brown, his wife, a shade lighter, has no difficulty, I presume, in looking white.

I asked him why he had only one wife. "Oh!" he replied, "I cannot feed more!"

I believe Makhmoud is really fond of me, though I am not always in the best of tempers. When a lady once asked him if I was kind to him, he looked very serious, very solemn, and replied: "Master not copper, master not tin, master not silver, my master all pure gold!" Dear old Makhmoud, no one ever paid me a prettier or less deserved compliment!

On the second day the valley opens out, and far off we can see a range of high rocky mountains, barren and black, burnt by the sun. Scattered here and there lie wretched villages, half buried in the sand. The inhabitants live miserably on what they can grow on the narrow strip of land fertilised by the Nile, and which, at certain points, is not more than three or four feet wide. We paid a visit to a more important village, but equally poverty-stricken in appearance. The children were naked, the men clothed in rags, and the women draped with long black shawls, with which they also covered their heads. The men were as black as Makhmoud, but I did not notice that the women were any less so!

The sunset is wonderful, and the wild-looking mountains are bathed in an exquisite glow. After the warm sunny days the nights are very cold, almost freezing. In the evening the crew don large overcoats with hoods, giving them the appearance of monks. Naturally they are Arabs, and we have on board certain elderly females . . . and yet, when I think of it, not so very elderly, who conduct themselves with them in a very extraordinary fashion. Yesterday evening two of them, each with an Arab for company, left the boat, and in the moonlight set off to explore . . . the unknown. From the deck we watched them disappear. If the white women who conduct

themselves thus with the Arabs would think for a moment of the harm which they are doing to the work of civilisation throughout Egypt, they might perhaps hesitate. They do not seem to realise that the native, convinced that all foreign women act in the same manner as these fools, despises them profoundly, saying to himself, "If that is the result of a Christian education, of their Western civilisation, of the emancipation of women—no, thanks! better be as we are, and keep our women safely shut up in the harem."

Before six o'clock on the morning of our third day out, I was abruptly awakened by some one whistling "Viens! Poupoule!" I had some difficulty, at the sound of this abominable noise, to realise that I was in the centre of Nubia, and between the First and Second Cataracts of the Nile. But it was not long before I was blessing the unknown person who had awaked me, for, leaving my cabin, I saw unrolled before my astonished eyes a scene of wondrous beauty. No more wild and savage rocks, no more yellow and barren sand, but superb vegetation. It was an exquisite vision, and I could hardly have believed it possible that one could experience such pleasure at the sight of a landscape so fresh and verdant. I no longer wondered that green should be the symbol of hope. What joy must be theirs who, crossing the immense sandy Desert on the backs of their camels, and under the burning rays of the sun, see at last the long-looked-for trees, promising pleasant shade and cooling waters!

Is it imagination or is it the contrast between the Desert we have just left, and all this freshness, that makes it seem that never before was anything so ideally beautiful?

For long we glided 'twixt the enchanting banks, till once again we entered the rocky hills. At one place stretching across the Desert they rise like immense ramparts whose summits are lined with colossal fortifications. These are the ruins of the ancient Roman fortress on which Ibrahim erected forts to stop the inroads of the Nubians. The weather is superb, and the man who to-day does not feel it good to be alive must have a gloomy mind or a very sad heart.

At 4 P.M. we arrived at Abu Simbel, one of the most interesting places in the Valley of the Nile. On the right bank of the

river there rises a formidable barrier of rock, in which Rameses II., the most celebrated of Egyptian monarchs, caused to be carved, thirty-two centuries ago, those temples which were justly considered one of the wonders of the world. No other temple in Egypt produces a greater impression of grandeur, and those who have had the good fortune to see it on a lovely moonlight night are not likely to forget the unique sight. At the entrance to the great temple are four colossal statues of Rameses II., measuring over sixty feet in height, and hewn from the rock itself. In spite of their enormous proportions the carving is very fine, and the expression life-like.

In the interior, scenes from the life of the great Egyptian monarch are depicted on the walls, and gods, men, women and horses are hewn and cut in the solid rock. It is a fantastic piece of work, and one can understand the adoration and veneration paid by the ancients to the man who, during his reign of sixty-seven years, had erected these wonderful buildings, which cover the lands of Egypt and Nubia, the temples of Abu Simbel, of Luxor, of Ramesseum, of Abydos, of Bubastes, and a large part of the temples of Karnac and Memphis.

Covered by mountains of sand Abu Simbel was discovered by Burckhardt, and in 1817 Belzoni brought the ruins to light; but they were again conquered by the sand until in 1844 Lepsius, and in 1869 Mariette himself, finally cleared them. It was at this time that the Empress Eugénie, at the height of her power, and in all the glory of her beauty, came to visit them.

Last winter she returned to Egypt, and this time pushed on as far as Khartoum. I shall never forget a certain evening on my return from the Sudan. It was the hour of sunset, when, a short distance above Abu Simbel, our boat passed a large dahabeah covered with green plants. In the midst of these, on the deck, a lady with white hair gazed dreamily across this land of Nubia which she had once before looked on thirty-six years before. It was the Empress. Who can explain the desire which had urged this woman to come at the close of her life, almost unknown and unrecognised, to revisit those places which were witnesses of her beauty and her power, of the adoration of the thousand flatterers who

surrounded her? Who can explain the state of mind which had led her, robbed of all of which she was proud, to these scenes which had witnessed her days of triumph? . . . Suez, Ismailia, Cairo, Abu Simbel, Paris! Have you ever seen her at a window of the "Continental," regarding the site of the palace where she once reigned? Have you ever seen her walking, with Grief and Sorrow as her companions, in the gardens which saw the first childish games of the Prince Imperial? Ah! what a Calvary that must be . . . or is it possible that with the passing of the years, Time, the great Healer, has endowed the ageing heart with the power of forgetting all the sadness and all the sorrow, and remembering the joy alone?

Sanderson

EMPRESS EUGENIE'S DAHABEAH

These were the questions I asked myself, whilst this white dahabeah, with its plants and flowers carried silently towards the setting sun, sinking in the fast fading gold of the Western sky, her who was Empress of the French, and who now is only a woman in the evening of her life, a life which belongs to the history of the world.

At four o'clock in the afternoon of the fourth day we arrived at Wadi Halfa, head of the line of the Sudan Railway. Accompanied by several young officers, Commandant Midwinter Bey, Director of Railways, came to meet me, and very kindly invited me to take tea with him and to visit, not the town, which is uninteresting, but the military camp, and the railway buildings. It is here that the engines come to be repaired, and that all the

work necessary for the upkeep of the line which unites Khartoum with the civilised world is undertaken. Amongst the workmen was pointed out to me a young apprentice, nephew of the Khalifa (successor of the Mahdi), that powerful leader of the Dervish hosts. He was a thin little negro, looking scarcely ten years old, who was working hard, filing a bar of iron. Fifty convicts, amongst whom was a man convicted of murdering his wife, work out their sentences here. Their conduct, it seems, is very good, and some, content with their life, ask to remain when their time is finished.

At Wadi Halfa there is a company of engineers almost entirely composed of the maimed. As I have mentioned elsewhere, in order to evade military service, many Egyptians cut off the first finger of the right hand, which, in former days, exempted them. Since the laying of the Sudan line things have changed, and when these gay deceivers arrive minus a digit, the official smiles and says, "Exactly, you are quite unable to shoot, but you can wield a pick-axe," and they are promptly enrolled in the engineers!

The *train-de-luxe* leaves Wadi Halfa at 8 P.M., and takes twenty-seven hours to reach Khartoum. It is made up of sleeping-cars, a restaurant-car, and third-class carriages for the servants. It is without doubt one of the most comfortable trains in existence. The compartments are much roomier than those of the European trains: the sleeping berths are like small bedrooms, in which, besides the bed, are a table and comfortable arm-chairs. The train is lighted throughout by electricity, and in each cabin an electric fan supplies continually a current of fresh air. The restaurant is first-rate, the meals well served, and all imaginable drinks, wines, beers, liqueurs and mineral waters are sold at reasonable prices . . . happily, for there is no country in the world where one drinks as one does in the Sudan. Whether this is due to the dryness of the air or to another cause, I do not know; but it is none the less certain that once Wadi Halfa is left behind, the most sober folk are attacked with a consuming desire to consume and develop a thirst comparable to no other thirst that ever was. I agree entirely with the opinion of that brilliant English war-correspondent, the late G. W. Steevens, who declared that

no one can ever really know what thirst is until they have entered the Sudan. In other countries such a thirst would kill a man in a few days; but here, strange and inexplicable fact, one can consume bottle after bottle without the slightest danger. Upon my word I do not believe that the greatest soaker who ever lived could ever get any "forrarder" in the Sudan!

Dittrich

TEMPLE OF ABOU SIMBEL

Dinner is served immediately after leaving Wadi Halfa; and the sensation is certainly a strange one of feeling oneself carried along by a powerful locomotive across deserts which some eight years ago were virgin, whilst discussing a dinner which would do honour to one of the best modern hotels. As a matter of curiosity, I give the menu:

Potage Julienne.
Poisson bouilli, Sauce hollandaise.
Grosse pièce de bœuf garni.
Petits pois à l'Anglaise.
Poulet rôti.
Salade de laitue.
Crême renversée.
Dessert et Café.

I certainly did not expect to find such a menu eight hundred and fifty miles from Cairo. Every table is occupied, and all the passengers are talking with the greatest animation. At the table next to mine sits the Grand Moufti of Egypt, who is on his road to Khartoum at the invitation of the Governor-General of the Sudan, and with him is a short thick-set man, with a large bushy moustache. Questions of education are being discussed, and, very excited, the little gentleman recounts his experiences whilst visiting a number of Egyptian schools. With a strong English accent he exclaims in French: "No, no. They must not be taught English. I cannot too often repeat it, and I have said the same thing to every one at Cairo: I am utterly opposed to the teaching of English in the schools!" I naturally imagined that I was listening to the Egyptian Minister of Education . . . but I was in error. The gentleman, it seems, was an English M.P., a trifle talkative, and decidedly aggressive; it was Mr. Gibson Bowles.

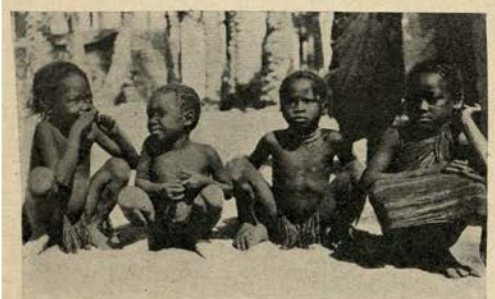
During the night the train covered two hundred and thirty miles of Desert, and at 7 A.M. we arrived at Abu Hamed, situated a short distance from the Nile, and where, much to their astonishment and joy, the travellers found a bathing establishment fitted up for their use. Men and women, enveloped in dressing-gowns or coats thrown hastily over their pyjamas, tumbled out of the sleeping-cars and took the bathrooms by storm. These were most comfortable. As large as an ordinary bedroom, they contained an immense bath, and a washstand surmounted by a looking-glass; water, hot and cold, was supplied by large taps, and fine soft bath-towels were also at hand.

As the train halts here for over an hour there is ample time to enjoy a thorough wash, which, needless to say, is much appreciated. During the stay here the carriages are thoroughly cleaned, and after one's tub places are taken once more in the restaurant car, where not a speck of dust remains, and the train moves off.

The day quickly passes in spite of the monotony of the journey. At first almost every one plays bridge, but continual interruptions are caused by some one crying, "The mirage; look! a mirage!" And every one gazes on the extraordinary spectacle. One could swear that across there on the Desert

were shining lakes. We seemed to see their curving shores, their calm waters, and here and there picturesque little islands dotting the surface . . . and yet it was only the mirage, and, in reality, there existed only sand, sand to infinity !

Towards 2 P.M. the train arrives at Berber, a town which, from the earliest times, has been one of the important trading centres in Africa. Here it is that gum, ivory, ebony, gold and slaves were brought in from the Sudan by way of the Nile, and whence again huge caravans departed on their long journey across the Desert to Suakim on the Red Sea. Berber is only some eighteen miles from the junction of the Nile and the Atbara, an important river, which, rising in the high Abyssinian plateaux, is at this point nearly 600 yards wide, and at the time of the rains of a depth of 20 to 30 feet.



Beam

SUDANESE CHILDREN

The country round Berber is rich, and with irrigation would become exceedingly fertile. A wealthy American, Mr. Leigh Hunt, well-known in Corea and Manchuria, where he has acquired important interests, has bought a vast tract of land round Berber, and is working hard to convert it into an immense estate. He intends to cultivate not only the native products of the country, but also, they say, on a very large scale, cotton and cocoa. Depopulated by famine, epidemics, and the Mahdi wars, the Sudan to-day lacks labour. It is said that Mr. Hunt intends to import negroes from the States. He believes that the climate would suit them perfectly, and that they will prove superior as workers to the Sudanese. In a country where polygamy is allowed (unless Mr. Hunt should prohibit it on his estate), the American negroes would work at the repopulation of the country with an energy not to be despised.

By the time this book shall have appeared the line of railway connecting Berber and Suakim will have been completed, and the Sudan, having then acquired a rapid outlet towards the sea, will be independent of the Egyptian lines. This is one of the most important events in its history, and to which I shall return in another chapter. The distance between Suakim and Berber is under two hundred and fifty miles, and the passenger trains will without doubt do the journey in less than twelve hours. Travellers going by steamer to Suakim, or rather to Port Sudan,* will be enabled to reach Khartoum in less than twenty hours.

Nothing in this world is perfect, and the journey from Wadi Halfa to Khartoum, in spite of all the comfort of the train, has a disadvantage which it is impossible to overlook. The dust is terrible, and enters the carriages even when the windows are shut. No one having a weak throat or delicate chest should attempt this trip. The carriages, whose internal arrangements and large size make so much for comfort, might be made more dust-proof than they are.

There are in the United States trains which cross the great sandy deserts between Omaha and San Francisco, and which are composed of waggons built specially to exclude the dust, but which at the same time are thoroughly well ventilated. I am almost ashamed to grumble. . . . It is really so wonderful that one can reach the very heart of the Sudan by a *train-de-luxe*, with sleeping-cars, restaurant, baths and iced drinks, . . . that it would perhaps be generous not to mention the dust. Besides, I believe the trouble will only be a temporary one, and that some day the Government of the Sudan will purchase other waggons into which not a grain of dust shall enter. It must be remembered that the Sudan Railway is a military line, built for strategic purposes, constructed primarily for the needs of the Anglo-Egyptian army, which was advancing towards the reconquest of the Sudan, and not for travellers and tourists.

The idea of this line across the Nubian deserts seemed a

* The harbour at Suakim being so dangerous, the authorities have decided to run the line to Sheikh Borghout, which is quite close to the town, and which will be known in future as Port Sudan.

dream, a chimera. It required all the energy of Lord Kitchener, Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, and the genius of the Canadian Girouard, to bring the affair to a successful issue. Convinced that the only way to destroy the power of the Khalifa and his Dervish hosts, and to reconquer the lost province, consisted in bringing to the field of battle troops which had not been worn out by long and weary marches, an army in fact which could count not only on immediate reinforcements, but which, without the hindrance of thousands of camels and porters, would have its supplies assured; convinced that that and only that could make victory certain, Lord Kitchener decided that the railway should be made, and made it was. He had the good fortune to be backed up by first-rate men, amongst whom was Girouard the engineer, who pushed forward the work with extraordinary energy and intelligence. Thanks to this iron road, the Anglo-Egyptian army, commanded by Kitchener, succeeded where others had been annihilated; he proved victorious, and none too soon, for who can say what would have happened had Kitchener been overcome, or even if he had delayed?

Marchand had planted the French flag at Fashoda: he had signed a treaty with the powerful Shilouk tribe, and he might possibly have received reinforcements from Abyssinia and the French Congo. Where he had passed others also could have come, and there is no reason to suppose that he could not have held out in his entrenched camp. Was it because England understood all this that Lord Kitchener made his grand effort, and threw his troops forward in the middle of summer instead of waiting until the autumn?

Whatever the reason may have been it is certain that it was owing to this military line, which to-day is thronged by tourists travelling by *train-de-luxe*, that the brilliant victory of the Anglo-Egyptian army at the gates of Omdurman, September 12, 1899, was due, a victory which gave back to Egypt her Sudanese possessions, made her *with England* mistress of the entire Nile, rendered the position of Marchand at Fashoda untenable, and put an end once and for all to the dreams of those who had seen the sources of the Nile in the hands of France and Abyssinia, her friend, almost her ally.

And that barely six years ago! What changes since then! The pacification of the Sudan achieved, a coolness between Menelik and the Republic, and, lastly, the *entente cordiale* between France and England!

And thinking thus in the restaurant-car of the *train-de-luxe*, my eyes fell on a large map hung on the wall, and on which I read in large letters "Map of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan"—a Sudan "Anglo-Egyptian," a country belonging to two countries at the same time, there truly was something to cause reflection!

Venieris

GRAND HOTEL, KHARTOUM

CHAPTER XVI

KHARTOUM

A modern town on ancient ruins—The end of Gordon and the heyday of the Dervishes—Reign of terror and famine—Battle of Omdurman and conquest of the Soudan—Slatin Pasha, former prisoner of the Mahdi, to-day Inspector-General to the Sudan Government—Anecdotes and souvenirs.

It is towards seven in the morning that the traveller catches his first glimpse of Khartoum. As the *train-de-luxe* arrives late in the evening, the night is passed in the sleeping-car, an arrangement which suits all the better, as the terminus of the line is not in Khartoum itself, but exactly opposite, on the other bank of the Nile.

White Nile, Blue Nile, or simply Nile; as few besides Egyptians and geographers know exactly which is which, it may be as well to briefly explain the difference. The Blue Nile, which rises in the highlands of Abyssinia, flows through the north-east portion of the Sudan, and after a journey of four hundred and twenty miles joins, just below Khartoum, the White Nile. This latter, flowing from the great lakes of Central Africa for a distance of some fifteen hundred miles, runs through the entire Sudan from south to north. By the joining of these two rivers the Nile is formed, which

continues its way towards Egypt and the Mediterranean, into which it empties itself some twenty-seven hundred miles further on.

Khartoum is built on the Blue Nile, a short distance above the point of junction with the White Nile. The passage between the station, situated on the right bank of the river and the town, situated on the other, is made by steamboat. Coming out of the dusty sleeping-cars the traveller takes a long breath of the fresh air, dry and invigorating, and is astonished that at such an early hour, and in mid-winter, the sunshine should be gilding with its rays the lovely scene before him. On the wide river, boats with white sails pass rapidly, whilst in others the negro oarsmen chant their monotonous song, struggling against the current, whilst steamers, with decks high above the water and painted white, fill the air with the noise of their engines and the shrieks of their sirens.

Opposite lies Khartoum, in a perfect oasis of vegetation. One can see the white and stately palace of the Governor-General, over which float the English and Egyptian flags, the long brick buildings of the Government offices, the huge college, and the charming little villas nestling in their gardens. The boat stops at the landing-stage of the hotel, "The Grand Hotel, Khartoum," opened, I believe, only two years ago. It is a long, two-storied building, surrounded with immense galleries on to which all the rooms open—a most delightful arrangement for those who like to see in passing what their neighbours are doing, and which also makes it very easy in the dusk to mistake one's room. For those, however, who prefer a quiet life, and object to prying eyes, the arrangement has less charm.

Travellers were loud in their complaints last winter in regard to this hotel. The prices are high, attendance very bad, and the food detestable. Of course, one must remember that one is in the Sudan, but as the town has resources of which the officers and residents know how to make good use, it is absolutely inexcusable that the hotel should not obtain them for their guests. I have good reason to believe that the Government, which has let to the Directors of the Company the extensive and beautiful garden in which the hotel is built

for the ridiculous sum of £50 per annum, has taken them to task, and it is to be hoped that very great improvements will be made. The trouble no doubt comes from the fact that the men who direct the business are no more hotel keepers than the Shah of Persia. They are capitalists who, immediately after the reconquest of the Sudan, came to Lord Kitchener asking for concessions for working certain mines in the existence of which they then believed. Thoroughly practical, the Commander-in-Chief said to them: "I shall give you the concession, but on the condition that you build an hotel of the first class." As the mines proved a myth, the concessionaries now attempt to extract from the hotel the immense dividends which they had dreamed that their mines would yield, whilst giving to their guests the minimum possible at the maximum price. The question of price is relatively unimportant. People who undertake a trip like this do not think of paying a few francs more or less per day, and they would willingly part with it in order to have the comfort which Cook and the Sudan Government give them on board their steamers and trains.

On the boat which took me from Khartoum into Central Africa I had every possible comfort, and the food was excellent. In fact, the only place between Alexandria and Fashoda where I have been badly fed and badly served, is the Grand Hotel at Khartoum, the Director of which, nevertheless, is a charming man, to whom the company, I have been told, does not give quite enough means.

The principal avenue of Khartoum is on the bank of the Blue Nile: large, planted with young trees, lit at night by electricity, and lined with the gardens of the most important buildings and private houses, it runs alongside the river for a distance of about two miles. Following it, one comes first to the Botanical and Zoological Gardens, where lions and other wild animals are confined in cages in the midst of a beautiful park, planted with the finest specimens of the African flora. Then come the hotel, numerous private residences occupied by the English officers, the Post and Telegraph Offices, the large building containing the offices of the various branches of the Government, the Governor's Palace, the Italian

Catholic Mission, the Club, still more private houses, the Gordon College, &c.

All along this fine avenue are to be met " tommies " of the English regiment clad in khaki : Sudanese soldiers black as coal, immensely tall and perched on calf-less legs of a length and thinness incredible, Arabs and negroes engaged in some business or other, and negresses, straight as the letter I, carrying on their heads immense jars of water, or enormous baskets, their figures gracefully draped in long black cotton shawls, for is there not a regulation in force in Khartoum that all natives shall be clothed ?. It is no doubt this habit of carrying heavy burdens on the head which gives to these negresses such a straight and erect carriage, this appearance of strength and grace. Far off they look charming, but near at hand they do not look beautiful, and one could wish that the wide opened shawl would not show these terrible breasts, wrinkled and hanging. Only the very young have firm and round breasts, but they are rare in the streets of Khartoum. It would seem that all these black beauties who thus work, carrying water or stones on their heads, are doing it in the service of the Government, and in the hope of obtaining a divorce. Unsatisfied with their married state, they petition the authorities to undo the tie, but, not having the small sum necessary to pay the fees, they are made to do a certain quantity of work instead. Divorce plays a great *role* with the Sudanese, who love a change, and who are not satisfied even with the four legitimate wives which, if they are Mohamedans, they are allowed.

Apart from the question of climate, it must be remembered that for the Sudanese and the Arab living on the land, the possession of several wives is an absolute necessity. He must have a sufficient number to enable him properly to cultivate his fields, to watch over his flocks, to look after his house, and above all in order to have a numerous progeny who, from their youth, will lend their help. A large offspring means a powerful family, and numerous powerful families in the same tribe mean for that tribe a preponderating influence.

Here, evidently, is the weak point of the Christian religion in Africa. To ask a negro to have but one wife, is to say to him that he must give up all hope of being rich, strong or

respected. The Mussulman religion is much more logical, better adapted to his needs, and much more easy to understand. "Allah is God, and Mahomet is His prophet!" That is simplicity itself; but try and make these poor negroes understand the doctrine of the Trinity! As well tell them to fly to the moon!

Khartoum not only stretches along the bank of the river,

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KHARTOUM, THE PALACE

but also inland towards the Desert. Fine large avenues cross each other at regular intervals, but here you will find only houses of more unpretentious appearance, or offices and banks. Carriages are almost unknown in the capital of the Sudan. The hotel possesses a pony-trap: a few officers have a cart or a buggy, whilst the Governor-General alone possesses several carriages and a motor. Saddle-horses, and especially donkeys, are the chief means of locomotion.

Whilst awaiting the day when Khartoum shall possess cabs one can find at the hotel a dozen jinrickshas, but, alas! the long Sudanese are quite unable to go like the brave little

Japs, for hours at a steady trot. Puffing, groaning, perspiring, they haul the little carriage with difficulty, and one always feels one is wasting time, however little one may have to do. With two men the pace is a trifle faster, but better still is to harness a donkey to one of these 'rickshas; then one becomes a child again, and memories arise (Heavens! how far off it seems!) when one drove a little cart harnessed with a goat in the Avenue des Champs Elysées. The donkey and the 'rickshas I found charming, and for twopence I could have halted in the Desert to build sand castles.

When the traveller has had a good look at the Palace, the villas, the gardens where the birds are singing amongst the trees, and the sweet-scented flowers, the large avenues where Sudanese, male and female, very civilised, pass and repass; when he has thoroughly inspected this pretty little modern town planted far off in Africa, and where peace, order and industry reign, he will ask himself with astonishment and unbounded admiration: "Can it be that I am on the same spot where Gordon and his followers were massacred by the fanatical and bloodthirsty followers of the Mahdi, and where, scarcely seven years ago, there was naught but a heap of ruins? Is it possible that this flourishing town can have arisen only yesterday on the site of the old Sudanese capital which witnessed the glorious period and the bloody drama known in history as the 'Conquest and Loss of the Sudan'?"

Yes, incredible as it may seem, it is nevertheless here, on this spot, that the conquering Egyptians under Ibrahim planted their flag when Mohamed Ali was on the throne. The immense empire of the Sudan was the fruit of victories gained during the reign of the Great Pasha, and in that of Ismail, who extended its boundaries even to the Great Lakes of Central Africa. Oppressed and exploited by their conquerors, whom they thoroughly despised, the Sudanese were ripe for revolt when, in 1881, there appeared in their midst a young religious Sheik, by name Mohamed Ahmed, whose reputation for holiness, added to a vague halo of mysterious power, spread throughout the country with extraordinary rapidity. Knowing well that in the state of subjection in which they were living, the Sudanese would follow him as one man on that day when he should

make appeal to the religious fanaticism smouldering in their breasts, and always ready to burst into flame, he proclaimed himself the Mussulman Messiah, the long-awaited leader, El Mahdi el Muntazer. This was the origin of that awful drama which for eighteen years drenched the Sudan in blood, crushed all the military expeditions sent to end it, drove back the Egyptians to their proper frontiers, and established in the country a reign of terror, bloodshed and slaughter.

At the call of the Mahdi, innumerable hosts flocked to his standard, and annihilated the first Egyptian troops sent against him. Having already at his disposal a formidable army, he invaded the province of Kordofan, and attacked the capital, El Obeid, one of the largest and richest towns in Africa. Repulsed, with enormous losses, by Said Pasha, a true hero, and Governor of the town, the Mahdi gave up the idea of taking the place by storm, but laying siege to it for five months, the population, dying of hunger, gave in, and were massacred almost to a man.

Egypt then sent against him an army of ten thousand men, under the English General Hicks, accompanied by several European officers, amongst whom were Colonel Farquhar, Baron Seckendorff and Major Herlth. In order to reach El Obeid across a country offering no supplies, not even a supply of water, and covered at that time of year with grass higher than a man, the army had as transport for its supplies, ammunition tents, &c., six thousand camels which marched in the centre of a square formed by the men. One can easily understand what a target was offered to the guns of the Dervishes by these six thousand camels surrounded by ten thousand soldiers, the whole massed in as small a space of ground as was possible.

After great difficulties and terrible sufferings, Hicks' army, discouraged and demoralised, was attacked on November 3, 1883, by thousands of the enemy, who, hidden in the scrub, poured in on the enormous square a hail of lead. It was a terrible scene. Surrounded by this circle of fire, men and beasts, wounded or dying, lay groaning, whilst the survivors, terrified, cried,* "Egypt, Egypt, where art thou? Oh! our Lady

* "Fire and Sword in the Sudan," by Sir Rudolph R. von Slatin Pasha.

Venieris

GENERAL VIEW, KHARTOUM

Zenab, now come to our aid!" To this cry the Sudanese, in the brushwood, replied by fresh volleys, shouting, "It is the Mahdi who comes!"

At daybreak firing ceased, and the army of Hicks', dying of thirst and leaving heaps of corpses behind, resumed its march in the hope of finding a well, and being able to construct a fortified camp near it. Hardly had it accomplished half a mile before it was suddenly attacked by a hundred thousand fanatics, who threw themselves on the Egyptians with indescribable fury. The butchery was horrible, and, with the exception of a few men made prisoners, the ten thousand Egyptians, Hicks himself and his officers, met their death.

The moral effect of this victory throughout the entire country was naturally immense. Thousands of men, women and children came hurrying from far off to see this wonderful being, who in their eyes appeared nothing less than the Heaven-Sent. The whole of the Sudan was at his feet, and although Egypt still occupied the north, including Khartoum, Senna, Kassala, Berber and Dongola, her position had become exceedingly critical, all the more so, as, whilst these distant events were taking place, a crisis, not less grave, raged at Alexandria and Cairo. The bombardment of Alexandria, the Revolution of Arabi, and, finally, the English occupation, rapidly succeeded each other.

It was very necessary that England, now mistress of Cairo, and arbiter of the destinies of Egypt, should come to her aid in this terrible situation. The plain fact of the matter was that Egypt, weighed down with debt, had neither money nor army left. But England desired to give neither the necessary funds nor the necessary men for a war against the Mahdi and his hordes, against the Sudan up in arms and formidable. There was, therefore, but one solution to the question, and that was to abandon temporarily the Sudan. But it was impossible to leave the Egyptian garrisons, who still occupied various posts, or the Consuls, merchants and foreign missionaries. At any cost it was necessary to attempt to save these. It was then that the English Government, in agreement with Tewfik Pasha, decided to confide to General Gordon the

difficult, almost impossible, task of bringing all these people, willy-nilly, from the Sudan back to Egypt.

Gordon, that hero already covered with glory, who had suppressed the famous Taepin rebellion in China, had formerly been Governor of the Sudan. Adored by the black soldiers and the population of Khartoum, admired and respected by all the Sudanese, he seemed to be the man *par excellence* for the work. He went alone, without reinforcements.

I shall not attempt here to retell the story of the deplorable events which followed. Finally shut up in Khartoum, surrounded by the wild hosts of the Mahdi, he defended himself for months with an ingenuity and a courage worthy of a better fate, waiting always for those reinforcements which he had asked from England. Reinforcements! "One English regiment," he wrote, "only one, to give back courage to my men, and to prove to the Mahdi that we have not been abandoned; one regiment only, and we are saved!"

It is impossible to study the subsequent events without being filled with an immeasurable indignation in seeing the inertia shown for some time by the English Government, the hesitation, the slowness, the errors committed by those whose duty it was to rescue Gordon and his followers. Sad as it is, it must be recognised that the army of rescue commanded by Lord Wolseley could have had ample time to arrive at Khartoum in order to save Gordon, if its leader, at the beginning, had shown more energy and decision, and if he had only followed the instructions which Gordon, knowing the country thoroughly, had sent him. Certainly the difficulties were great, but they were not insurmountable.

Gordon managed to hold out considerably longer than he had thought possible; but the fatal day came at last, when tens of thousands of Dervishes rushed furiously on the defences of the town; and Gordon, who twenty times might have saved himself, but who would not desert those who were with him, fell at his post, dying a hero's death. The victors gave themselves up to the savage joy of massacre, then, after sacking the town, they reduced it to ruins.

The Mahdi and his hosts were now masters of the Sudan. At the junction of the two rivers, on the left bank of the White

Nile, they settled down at a place called Omdurman, then consisting of a village and a small fort. From all parts of the Sudan the population flocked in, and the village soon became an enormous town, towards which all the produce of the country made its way.

Fourteen years rolled by in which the Mahdi, and at his death the Khalifa his successor, with their Emirs, gorged themselves on what they could squeeze out of the unfortunate people who had followed them. At times they would menace the Egyptian frontier, at others carry the war into Abyssinia, where they succeeded in defeating King John himself, whilst continually crushing the tribes whom they considered were not paying enough into their coffers, seizing women and children, encouraging the slave-dealers, and living on a scale of the wildest extravagance. By these means the Mahdi, and after him the Khalifa, succeeded in ruining the country, which then became the prey of famine, and the most terrible epidemics.

By hunger, by disease, by fire, sword and torture, *millions* of Sudanese, men, women and children, perished; I say *millions*. The population of the Sudan, which twenty years ago was about 10,000,000, is to-day reduced to 2,000,000, and that in spite of the fact that the Sudanese are a prolific race. Hundreds of villages, once prosperous and populous, no longer exist. I believe it would be impossible to imagine anything more terrible than the last years of the Khalifa's reign. One must read the admirable pages written by Slatin Pasha,* who for twelve years was a prisoner of the Dervishes, twelve years of suffering moral and physical almost indescribable, in order to obtain some idea of the horrors which were enacted at Omdurman at the time of the famine. One evening, a donkey dying of hunger fell in the street before his eyes; hardly had the unfortunate animal ceased to live before the women fell on him, cutting open his belly, and devouring his entrails!

Whilst the Sudan, delivered over to the awful rule of the Khalifa and his Emirs, marched towards certain ruin, Egypt, guided by the firm hand of Lord Cromer, gradually revived,

* "Fire and Sword in the Sudan."

Little by little as the finances recovered and prosperity returned, the military forces were increased. I cannot say that the Egyptian army was reorganised, for, properly speaking, in 1883 it had ceased to exist. The new army has been practically created entirely by English officers, whose worth is undoubted, and who have given themselves heart and soul to the task. They have succeeded beyond all expectation, and the results obtained are really wonderful.

At last the hour struck when Egypt could think once more of reconquering the Sudan, and England of redeeming her errors, and avenging Gordon. The young army was at last capable of taking the field and fighting gloriously, side by side with the best of Britain's soldiers. The work begun by General Sir E. Wood, and continued by General Sir F. Grenfell, had been brought by General Kitchener to an unlooked-for degree of perfection. Whilst the troops were being prepared, the railway advanced rapidly across the Desert and at last, during the summer of 1898, the Anglo-Egyptian army, which was destined to break the Dervish power, was concentrated between Berber and the Atbara. It was composed of one division of English infantry, one division of Egyptian infantry, one regiment of English cavalry, ten squadrons of Egyptian cavalry, one field battery, one battery of howitzers, two 40-pounder siege guns, four Egyptian field batteries, twenty maxims, eight companies of the camel corps, and lastly, on the Nile and protecting the left flank of the army, six gunboats followed by eight steam transports, and a number of boats fully loaded with supplies and ammunition, in all over 22,000 men, of whom about 9000 were English and the rest Egyptian and Sudanese.

In the middle of the month of August the army commenced its march on the left bank of the Nile, and on September 1 it had reached Kerreri, seven miles or so from Omdurman. It was here that the terrible battle took place which finally crushed the Dervish power, and put an end to Mahdism. With their usual disdain of death, with the reckless insolent courage which had so often before brought victory, forty thousand Dervishes threw themselves furiously against the Anglo-Egyptian lines; but these remained firm, not a Briton, not a Sudanese, not an Egyptian wavered. Under the rain of

bullets, of shrapnel and shell from 20,000 rifles and fifty guns, the Dervishes charged and recharged, seeking death rather than defeat. It was only when the sand was strewn with corpses, when almost all the Emirs had fallen beside their standards, when a handful only of men still surrounded the Khalifa, that these fanatics quitted the field of battle and fled.

The Anglo-Egyptian troops had at last obtained their revenge for past defeats. Omdurman and the ruins of Khartoum were reconquered. The losses amounted to only fifty killed and some 300 wounded. The enemy lost in killed 11,000 men, whilst almost 15,000 wounded perished for lack of aid or were killed.

Dittrich

LORD KITCHENER

Once master of Omdurman, Lord Kitchener had the tomb of the Mahdi destroyed, and his remains thrown into the Nile.

M. de Freycinet, in his "La Question d'Egypte," thus describes the events which followed the Battle of Omdurman:

"On the following day a decisive battle took place in which not only the soldiers of the Mahdi,* but a defenceless multitude were exterminated. It is better to throw a veil over this terrible day, of which it is difficult to appreciate all the circumstances. But the glory of the General-in-Chief would certainly

* Of the Khalifa, successor of the Mahdi, who had died several years before.—(A. B. de G.)

have been greater had a little more humanity been shown in the hour of victory. Why that scene of the profanation of the tomb of the prophet? Why that mutilated skeleton thrown into the Nile? Such acts, which we should like to believe were those of subordinates, do not enhance the fame of their authors, and leave behind them a terrible legacy of hate."

These are grave indictments, all the more so as they are written by an eminent man, and which I think it only just to refute and explain.

M. de Freycinet has been led into error when he accuses Lord Kitchener of having been guilty of a lack of humanity; and he will be the first, I am sure, to regret the paragraph in which he speaks of the extermination of a defenceless multitude.

On the field of battle of Kerreri there were none but armed men, and not a single shot was fired against the population of Omdurman, who, by the Sirdar's orders, were left absolutely unharmed. This leniency was even criticised, for it enabled a certain number of fanatics to hide in the town, and to suddenly attack the Egyptian soldiers as they passed. There is not a shadow of truth in the reproach levelled at Lord Kitchener. As to the thousands of wounded who perished of their wounds and of thirst, and of which many were killed, it is necessary, before uttering cries of horror, to try to understand the situation. Having themselves never given quarter, having never forgiven or pardoned, having invariably massacred their enemies, the wounded Dervishes waited only to be finished off. With their terrible fanaticism, their inveterate hate of the infidel, their belief that the death of an enemy would open to them the gate of Paradise, their one and only thought, even when at the last gasp, was to strike yet another blow before they died.

Woe to the English or Egyptian soldier who offered his water-bottle to a wounded Dervish burning with fever, and parched with thirst! woe to the Red Cross soldier who thought to render aid! woe to the officer or soldier who passed carelessly by a fallen enemy! With one supreme effort, the Dervish would raise himself, and, pressing the trigger of his pistol, or hurling with all his remaining force his deadly spear, he killed whomsoever sought to succour him. With such ferocious

beings nothing could be done, and no help could therefore be given to the wounded. They had to be left to die under the burning sun, whilst those who rose, seeking a victim, had to be despatched.

As to the desecration of the tomb of the Mahdi, it took place, not only under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, but following the advice given to him by the highest Mahommedan authorities in Egypt, who considered that it was impossible

Marques Fiorillo

OMDURMAN, RUINS OF MAHDI'S TOMB

to leave standing a monument erected to the man who had posed as a prophet sent by God and who had imposed on the unfortunate peoples, simple and ignorant, whom he had crushed with his bloody tyranny—to the memory of the man who commanded the massacre of the defenders of El Obeid, of the ten thousand men under Hicks, of the population of Khartoum, and tens of thousands of other unfortunate creatures, and who caused to be exhibited on the ends of a lance the heads of Hicks and Gordon—to the man, ignorant and savage, in whose name the entire Sudan had been devastated by sword and fire.

In all the countries into which the English have penetrated, they have respected the religion of the inhabitants. They even push this so far to-day in Mahommedan countries as to forbid

their missionaries to proselytise. Mahdism could not be considered as a religion, but only as a bloodthirsty fanaticism which attacked Mussulman Egypt as well as Christian Abyssinia, and which, from every point of view, it was absolutely necessary to crush, and leave no trace visible. To respect the tomb of the Mahdi would have been to spare the symbol of what they had come expressly to destroy, the symbol to which the looks of all those who had followed him either through fear, ignorance or fanaticism, would have continued to turn. The tomb destroyed, and the bones of this man, in whose name so many crimes had been committed, thrown to the wind, was for these simple minds the proof of the feebleness of his doctrines, and of the power of those who to-day have assured to the Sudan prosperity and peace.

That was, indeed, an impressive ceremony which marked the taking possession of the ruins of Khartoum by Lord Kitchener and his staff, followed by a religious service, conducted in the open air, on the very spot of the Palace where Gordon had fallen. That was civilisation's revenge, the revenge of England and of Egypt, the revenge of these officers to whom Gordon had so often cried, "Help!" and who had heard the cry too late.

Whilst the cavalry pursued the Khalifa and what remained of his army, picking up here and there the hundreds of women of his harem who had fled, Lord Kitchener and his officers set themselves to rebuild Khartoum. The Sirdar thought for a moment of bringing in the entire population of Omdurman, and of destroying that town root and branch; but later he gave up that idea, and decided, instead, that Khartoum should become the official town, the Anglo-Egyptian town *par excellence*, the city of palaces and mansions, and that Omdurman should remain the native town with its important markets to which long caravans of camels should bring the produce of the entire Sudan. To-day there is, opposite Khartoum, on the Blue Nile, a third town whose importance is increasing with incredible swiftness. This is Khartoum North, where are the warehouses and yards connected with the railway and the steamer traffic, also the docks, the Government stores, &c., &c.—in fact the manufacturing district of the town. Who

would have blamed Lord Kitchener if, planting the flags of England and Egypt over the ruins of Khartoum, he had said: "All this belongs to us"? This, however, he did not do, as he had no desire to alienate in any way the old inhabitants of the town, and the land was bought at four times its value from all those who could prove their claims. In six years modern Khartoum has arisen, healthy and pleasant, on the ruins of the old, and is to-day the town which I briefly described at the beginning of this chapter.

The Mudir (Governor) of the town and the province, Colonel Stanton, a talented officer and an administrator of great worth, works, with a perseverance and intelligence worthy of the greatest praise, towards the improvement and development of Khartoum. What a pleasure and what a reward it must be to him who saw the ruins of yesterday, when he sees to-day what has been accomplished with such marvellous rapidity!

There is at Khartoum another man whose feelings it would be interesting to analyse when, in his uniform, covered with decorations, and on a superb charger, he gallops along these lovely avenues. That man is Slatin Pasha, the former prisoner of the Mahdi, to-day Inspector-General to the Government of the Sudan. What a romance his life has been! Read his book "Fire and Sword in the Sudan," and you will be astonished to learn what a human being can endure and suffer, morally and physically. He must indeed have had the constitution of a horse and the heart of a lion to have passed through such awful experiences. Born an Austrian, entering the service of the Sudan when Gordon for the first time was Governor-General, Slatin, when the country rose in revolt to follow the Mahdi, was Governor of the Province of Darfour, which he defended with all his might. He certainly did his duty up to the moment when all resistance became impossible. At the beginning of the crisis, learning that his men hesitated to follow him on account of his being a Christian, he publicly embraced the faith of Islam before all his troops.

Gordon, on his return to Khartoum, where he was fated to perish, was indignant on learning this; and in his "Journal" he speaks with bitterness of those foreign renegade officers who were ready to change their religion to save their skins.

I believe sincerely that Slatin was thinking less of his life than of his province and the Egyptian soldiers who were under his orders, and whom he wished at all costs to save, up to the moment when, as he believed, reinforcements would reach him.

Dittrich

SLATIN PASHA AS A DERVISH

These failed to arrive, and, at an end of his resources, Slatin, to whom the Mahdi promised his life, surrendered. At first he was well treated; for, speaking the language of the country, he might have proved useful in the opinion of the Mahdi as a means of communication, should the occasion have arisen, with the infidels at Khartoum. Taken along with the army which laid siege to that town he had the grief of seeing it succumb. What awful feelings must have torn his heart when there was brought to him, in a blood-stained cloth, the head of Gordon, the chief whom he had admired and loved! He himself, put into irons and loaded with chains, suffered for weeks all the physical and moral tortures imaginable. The Khalifa ended nevertheless by taking him into his service, and for twelve years Slatin was his slave, crouched at his door or running with naked feet after his horse!

At last, in March 1885, he succeeded in escaping, and gaining Assouan. Scarcely had he returned to civilisation than he once more offered his services to England and to Egypt, and helped considerably towards the success of the final expedition commanded by Lord Kitchener. Knowing the Sudan

thoroughly, its inhabitants and their language, the strength and the weaknesses of the Dervishes, he was naturally in a position to give the most valuable assistance.

Khartoum reconquered, he desired to remain there with the pioneers who had set themselves to restore the town, and to engage in the work of civilisation which in such admirable fashion, and in the short space of six years, has made of the immense Sudan a country where, after so much strife, calm and tranquillity now reign. It is undoubted that he has rendered great services, services which are highly appreciated by the Governor-General, Sir Reginald Wingate.

Astonished that he should have desired to return to a country where he had so terribly suffered, certain persons have said that he was induced to do so by the desire of revenge, of a vengeance terrible and formidable against not only the Khalifa and his Emirs killed in battle, but also against all those, strong or feeble, men or women, who, in some way or other, had added to his sufferings and his humiliations. There are people in this world cursed with fantastic imaginations. That Slatin should desire to be avenged on the Khalifa, and that he was filled with joy when he beheld him dead, when the tomb of the Mahdi was destroyed, and when thousands of Dervishes lay heaped on the battle-field of Kerreri, of that I have no doubt, and I consider that it was only natural. That was victory in which every soldier rejoices. But from that to believing that he has remained in the Sudan to hunt down and destroy all those who, more or less, were concerned in his suffering, is a far step indeed.

Slatin Pasha has remained there because he occupies a position which is unique, and in which he can render great services to the Government: because he loves the country, and is interested in the work of civilisation being accomplished; because he is well paid, respected and esteemed by the Governor-General . . . and, lastly, because he naturally enjoys the sensation of being free, rich, powerful, surrounded by every luxury, in the place where he passed some twelve years of his life in terrible suffering as the slave of the Khalifa.

Venieris

GORDON MEMORIAL COLLEGE

CHAPTER XVII

THE SUDAN IN 1905

The future of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan—What it has cost, and what it will cost—What it will yield—The Governor-General, Sir Reginald Wingate, and his work as judged by the Khedive himself—The right man in the right place—Concessions, lands, mines, and companies—The concession-hunter on the war-path—The future railways—The wealth of the country—The waters of the White and Blue Niles—The Marquis di Rudini—His personal impressions—Financial questions—Colonel Bernard Bey, Financial Secretary, and his genius—The Francophile sentiments of the Governor-General—Commercial relations with the Congo—New outlets and new routes.

"THE Sudan," wrote General Gordon in 1884, "is an absolutely useless possession, has always been so, and will always be so."

The opinion of the celebrated General was shared by those of his officers who knew the country best, and amongst others by Colonel Stewart. It is evident to-day that they were mistaken, and that Lord Cromer has excellent reasons for ending his annual report for 1903 with these words :

"Without incurring a charge of excessive optimism, it may be anticipated that, with the judicious expenditure of capital, and the continuous application of a system of government such as that which is now being very skilfully directed by Sir Reginald Wingate and his staff, the future of the country will be far less gloomy than was predicted by the two high authorities quoted above. But progress will be slow."

Slow? Lord Cromer is modest, both on his own account and on that of those who, for seven years, have laboured at this work of civilisation. Considering the difficulties of the task, and the meagre resources available, I find that progress has been made with extraordinary rapidity, and that what has been already accomplished is simply marvellous. I am not alone in my opinion: it is that of all the foreigners whom I have met in Egypt, and amongst them the Marquis di Rudini.

"I have discovered Khartoum," he said to me, "and I am filled with astonishment. Certainly Khartoum is not the entire Sudan; but from what I have seen and heard here, I can form a very good idea of what England has accomplished—and in no other place has she better earned her title of the 'greatest colonising nation in the world.' The English have an extraordinary power of organisation, but what in my eyes is the most admirable feature is, that they have accomplished this gigantic task with such economy that one can hardly believe that it has only cost them some two and a half millions sterling. And we foolish folk have spent twenty millions in conquering our unfortunate little colony of Erythrea!

"The English have already found means of obtaining revenue from the Sudan; and notwithstanding the immensity of the country, and all the works which they are executing, it costs only a couple of hundred thousand or so to Egypt . . . and nothing at all to England. Erythrea, did you ask me? Alas! my dear fellow, £280,000 a year it costs us now, and heaven knows if it will ever yield anything . . . whereas the Sudan! In a quarter of a century it will be one of the finest provinces in Africa!"

Not only did the conquest of the Sudan cost not more than two and a half millions, but better still, immediately after the

Battle of Omdurman, Lord Kitchener (speaking, I suppose, as Sirdar of the Egyptian Army) was able to declare that this money had not vanished in smoke, but that the campaign, in reality, had cost nothing. These are his words :

" You may take it that during the two and a half years' campaign extra military credits to the amount of two and a half millions have been expended. In this sum I have included the recent grant for the extension of the railway from Atbara to Khartoum, the work on which is already in hand. Well, against this large expenditure we have some assets to show ; we have or shall have 760 miles of railways, properly equipped with engines, rolling stock and a track with bridges in good order . . . well, for this running concern I do not think that £3000 a mile will be considered too high a value. This represents two and a quarter millions out of the money granted, and for the other quarter of a million we have 2000 miles of telegraph line, six new gunboats, besides barges, sailing crafts and—the Sudan."

The question I ask myself is : Was there ever a campaign which relatively cost so little, and brought so much ? I believe not. The situation of the Sudan was in 1898 more than discouraging. The country was completely ruined, three-quarters of the population had perished, and those remaining, still quivering under the recollection of the crisis through which for almost twenty years they had been passing, were actively hostile to their conquerors. They had not forgotten all the suffering through which they had gone at the hands of the representatives of Egypt at the time of the first occupation. It was necessary to create all the details of a Government which should respond to the needs of the country, and an administration which should stretch to the outskirts of this immense territory, covering a total area of one million square miles. It was necessary to re-establish order, reconstruct Khartoum, organise law-courts and the police, abolish slavery, regulate commerce, found schools, watch over sanitary affairs, and struggle against the epidemics from which the country was suffering. All that required to be done, but above all it was necessary to convince the half savage population

that these things were for their good, that it was they who would profit by them, and that a new era of justice and peace, work and prosperity had begun.

Egypt being unable to support the cost of such a Government it was absolutely necessary to create a Budget, and to impose taxes. But it was quite as necessary that these taxes should be imposed in a manner so equitable and so just that

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GARDENS IN KHARTOUM

the population, still very poor, should be able to support them without hardship, and thus have no reason for complaint. All that has been accomplished and much more, and so well that not only are the natives satisfied and content, but the resources of the country have developed with a rapidity quite unlooked for.

I shall give one example only. In 1898 the revenues of the Sudan were estimated at £8000, they produced £35,000. The revenues for 1904 were estimated at £429,000, they produced £540,000! Certainly, no one six years ago would have dreamt that such a result could have been obtained in so short a space of time.

In spite of this almost incredible progress, the Sudan cannot yet meet its expenditure, which amounted last year to £840,000. The Egyptian Government contributes annually a sum of nearly £400,000 towards the expenses of the Sudan. It is only right to note, however, that the burden is not such a heavy one as the figures would suggest, for it is necessary to deduct: (1) £160,000 for the upkeep of the Egyptian soldiers stationed in the Sudan, instead of as formerly on the frontier; (2) almost £80,000 obtained by the Custom-House at Alexandria on goods sent from abroad to the Sudan, and (3) almost £90,000 paid to the Egyptian Railways, Posts and Telegraphs for goods and passengers whose destination is the Sudan, as well as postage and telegrams which are sent to them there.

It follows, therefore, that the real annual contribution of Egypt is reduced to about £80,000.

Certainly, the Sudan is worth that, and much more since, now that it is in the possession of Egypt, she has no longer on her frontier that volcano of fanaticism—Mahdism—with which she was for so long threatened, and, besides, it is in the Sudan and not in Egypt that the huge works proposed by Sir William Garstin will be undertaken, which will be the means of doubling the quantity of water available to-day for Egypt. When one considers that these works, estimated to cost £22,000,000, will double the agricultural wealth of Egypt, the £80,000 which the Sudan costs seems a very small sum. Besides, it is certain that the Sudan will continue on its path of progress already so bright, and that the day will come when not only will its Budget balance, but a surplus will be shown.

In the same way that Egypt is indebted to the wise administration of Lord Cromer for its present prosperity, so is the Sudan indebted to its Governor-General for the marvellous progress which has been made. Sir Reginald Wingate, who is at the same time Sirdar (Commander-in-Chief) of the Egyptian Army, has brought to bear on the Sudan all his qualities of a great administrator.

His Highness the Khedive, who is certainly no mean judge of men, and who is in a position to judge of those whom England has sent him, once said to me:

"The Egyptian Army has never had a better Sirdar, and

W. Crooke

SIR REGINALD WINGATE

as Governor-General of the Sudan he has rendered, and is rendering, invaluable services. It is thanks to his zeal, his intelligence, his energy, his will power, and his profound knowledge of the country and the needs of its inhabitants, that the Sudan has in so few years taken this enormous bound. I am deeply grateful for the admirable way in which he has undertaken his task, and I admire to the full what he has accomplished. He is the right man in the right place, and I trust that he will remain in his post for many years to come."

General Wingate is one of the most attractive men I have met. Simple and pleasant, his manner is full of charm, a charm under which one can recognise a great strength of will and immense energy. He expresses himself fluently in French, and enjoys speaking that language. I had several interesting conversations with him in regard to the future of the Sudan, which lies very near to his heart, and he foresees for the country a progress, if not rapid, at least sure.

"The rapidity of this progress," he said to me, "depends on three things, which, unfortunately, we cannot hope soon to have: labour, increased means of communication, and water. These are what are wanting to the Sudan. Think that to-day we have barely 2,000,000 inhabitants, with much too large a proportion of women and children, whereas some twenty years ago it numbered over 10,000,000. Of course, Arabs and negroes are prolific races, and with peace, re-population will advance rapidly; but still, the improvement is not one which you can see from day to day. Perhaps the Egyptians may emigrate to us in a few years, when the Sudan shall have lost the bad reputation which past events have given her. Future means of communication and lines for increasing our commerce have been well studied, and, as you know, in a few months we shall be in touch with the sea through the 'Nile Red Sea Railway.' We shall then have direct railroad communication with the sea, and a port which shall be in Sudanese territory. It is by this means that goods will now be delivered in the Sudan, and that our products will be exported."

"Is it not said in certain quarters, General, that this line, constructed with money lent by Egypt, will do the latter very considerable harm, since it will draw away all the traffic which

to-day passes through the port of Alexandria, and reaches Assouan by the Egyptian Railways ? "

"Quite true," replied the Governor; "that theory has been advanced, but it will not hold water. As long as the Sudan is dependent on this one and costly road of communication by Egypt and the Nile, her commerce can take no great step forward. Things will remain as they are to-day, and Egypt will continue to pocket the small sum of which you speak, with very little hope of ever seeing it increased. On the other hand, as you remarked, the new railway will undoubtedly take away from her this small revenue. But the Sudan Treasury will profit by it, and as our revenues will increase because of the rapid growth of our commerce, thanks to this new outlet, we shall first of all be able to pay to Egypt interest on the money advanced by her, and, ultimately—and this is the important point—the quicker the development of the Sudan, the sooner will the time arrive when we shall be able to do without her financial aid."

"And as to the water, General ? "

"In regard to that, the Sudan will benefit by the great schemes of Sir William Garstin . . . but, so far, they are only proposals, the realisation of which may not take place for years. Nevertheless, the Egyptian Government has sent a special commission, which, in collaboration with my officers, is studying the question, and it will certainly have a result, small to begin with, whilst we await the future great reservoirs. Some minor irrigation canals have already been made, and the Sudan can now take water from the Nile, *in summer*, at a time when our doing so cannot harm Egyptian agriculture. For Egypt does not permit us to take this water on which her existence depends. You see that when, speaking in her name, England declared that she could not permit another Power to establish itself on the Upper Nile, and to monopolise the water without which Egypt could not exist, she was acting in good faith."

"General," I said, "before my departure from Paris I heard rather a curious story. One of my friends, Baron B., informed me that he had met a French merchant, a colonist I believe, who possesses large estates in the Congo Colony, and who told him that he had made many attempts to obtain

permission to send his products by the Sudan *via* the Nile and one of its tributaries, the Jur, which is navigable to within a short distance of his place. He said that such an outlet, much more rapid and less costly than the one of which he made use, viz., the route by the Congo to the Atlantic, would give an enormous impetus to his business, and to those of the other colonists whose plantations lie on the borders of the Sudan. . . . But he assured my friend that his request had been very badly received, and that it was clear that no encouragement would be given to the commerce of French Congo to pass by the Nile."

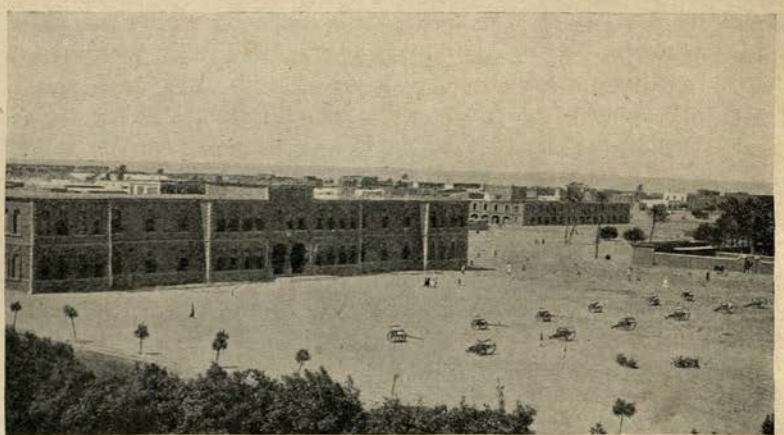
Whilst I was speaking General Wingate's face assumed an expression of astonishment which quickly changed to indignation. "That," he said, "is how history is written! What you have just told me is an abominable lie, and, curiously enough, I have here, in my desk, a document which will prove to you that there is not a word of truth in the whole story. Before showing you the passage in my official report in regard to this, let me just tell you what has happened.

"Last year, we received a letter from a Monsieur Pierre,* a colonist in the French Congo, explaining that he intended returning to France by the Sudan, in order to study the route from the point of view of an outlet on Suakim. As the idea appeared to me to be an excellent one, I gave orders to the officers commanding the frontier posts and the stations in the interior to place themselves entirely at M. Pierre's disposal. The latter, in fact, undertook the journey, and arrived here, at Khartoum, where we discussed the question. Far from opposing his scheme, I declared to him that I would do everything in my power to encourage the forwarding of the products of the French Congo by way of the Sudan, and to consider the commercial relations between the two countries. In order to give him indisputable proof of my good faith, I promised to order without delay a steamer of very shallow draught, which would be able to ascend the River Jur to the point indicated

* My friend not having given me the name of the colonist who had related to him his failure to secure an outlet by way of the Sudan, I am quite unable to say if it was M. Pierre, but naturally the Governor was led to believe that it was.

by M. Pierre, a boat which would be set aside for this international service. This boat will be completed almost immediately and will be ready to sail for the Jur, but of M. Pierre we have no further news."

Having thus spoken, the General made me read the part of his official report in which he briefly related these facts, announced the construction of the boat, and his intention to



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WAR OFFICE, KHARTOUM

encourage every effort which should tend to increase the traffic by the Nile and the new railway, then he added :

"Our greatest desire is to live on the friendliest terms with France and her Colonies, our neighbours more or less close."

Having heard that a large number of capitalists, foreseeing the future wealth of the Sudan, were already on the look-out for concessions of land, and that requests were pouring in on the Governor-General, who invariably refused them, I asked if such was the case.

"Numerous requests," he replied, "are in fact addressed to me, which I am obliged to reject for several reasons, of which I shall give you the two principal. The first is that the men who are asking us for land, being unable to do anything with it unless irrigated, ask us also for water, and for the present

we cannot give them that. The second is, that we do not yet know exactly what land belongs to us, or over how much of it natives may have rights, and, as you know, we are most particular not to wrong any one. We are working on a survey of the Sudan, which is already well advanced. When it is finished we shall be in a better position to grant concessions."

To these explanations of the General I believe I may add that he is firmly resolved to keep out of the Sudan, by every means in his power, the speculative element, which has done such harm to Egypt. As long as Sir Reginald Wingate is Governor-General, no one, large or small, will pluck the Sudan.

As I have mentioned, the work which is being accomplished in the Sudan is certainly due to the excellent administration of the Governor-General, but it would be unjust not to recognise that he has colleagues of the greatest value, amongst whom I shall name Colonel Henry, Adjutant-General, a brilliant officer, and one of the best soldiers England has lent to Egypt; Mr. Bonham-Carter, Legal Secretary, to whom has fallen the difficult task of establishing a system of justice in keeping with the degree of civilisation attained by the country, and which shall be easily understood by all these simple-minded, ignorant natives, these big children which the Sudanese are. You will find in his reports some excellent examples of the state of intelligence of these beings, such as:

Kwat Wad Awaibung, a Shilouk, accused of having assassinated Ajak Wad Den, acknowledged the crime, but excused himself in the following fashion:

"'Ajak,' he said, 'owed me a sheep, and not only did he refuse to pay me, but he declared that he would show me what he was fit for. Next day my son was devoured by a crocodile. That was evidently the work of Ajak, and that is why I killed him. For a long time things had gone badly between us, because I am a better hippopotamus hunter than he, and for this reason he bewitched me and my family too.'"

It certainly cannot be expected that the laws of a civilised country can be understood by this Shilouk as if he were a common hooligan!

The "Sudan Penal Code," copied from the Indian, but with modifications which the state of the country seemed to

demand, is in force, and gives every satisfaction. Although the government of the Sudan is a military one, it has the assistance of many civilians, and amongst others of four civil judges.

The extraordinary increase in the revenues of the country, which in seven years have increased from £35,000 to £560,000, as well as the cheap and economical manner in which the administration is conducted, have astonished many great men of business, who have at last discovered that the Sudan possesses a "Master of Finance," a real genius, in Colonel Bernard Bey, the Financial Secretary. The art with which he balances his Budget, increases each year his credits, and manages to meet all the most pressing calls, in short to obtain the maximum of results with the minimum of expenditure, is marvellous. The Colonel is one of those men whom the large financial companies would willingly take into their service at his weight in gold, but whose interest in the work begun keeps at his modestly rewarded post.

Amongst the English to-day in the service of the Egyptian and Sudanese Governments there are men who could earn an income twice or three times as large if they cared to quit their posts to-morrow; and I mean by that not only those whose salaries are small, but those who are receiving £1200 to £2000 per annum.

In France, as in Germany and most of the European countries, the majority of men who interest themselves in Colonial policy advise "centralisation," all the reins of government of the Colony in the hands of a man who directs more or less well, at a greater or less distance. To all these students of Colonial affairs I would recommend the reading of the last report of Lord Cromer, covering the report of Sir Reginald Wingate.

They will read there, on page 110, that the system adopted in the Sudan has been to push "decentralisation" to the furthest limit. These are interesting and instructive lines, which explain the success of England as a colonising nation. I will quote one passage:

"It is recognised that any attempt to govern the Sudan in detail from Cairo would be as disastrous as to endeavour

to manage Egyptian affairs from London, and this, I am glad to say, has never been done and, I trust, never will be done."

To establish order and tranquillity and develop the resources of the country was a formidable task, and one which necessarily went hand in hand with another not less difficult and important, the raising of the population from its terrible ignorance by establishing schools where the rising generation should be instructed.

Lord Kitchener understood this, and after the victory of Omdurman he proposed that a great College should be founded at Khartoum in memory of Gordon. The appeal was responded to, and a public subscription opened in England realised £140,000. Of this sum £30,000 was employed in the construction of an enormous building of outwardly unpleasing appearance, but inwardly admirably fitted up. The remainder of the subscription brings in annually £3600. Under the able direction of Mr. James Currie, who is at the head of the Gordon Memorial College, as well as the Department of Public Instruction, great progress has been made. Four years ago the object in view was simply to create a small class of artisans, to spread elementary education amongst the bulk of the people, and to create a native administrative class, which could furnish men capable of filling the subordinate official posts.

The College is to-day divided into three departments. The first consists of a normal school, from which issue the teachers and judges for the Mahommedan Tribunals, and which last year contained eighty-five pupils; the studies are conducted entirely in Arabic. The second is a primary school, the classes of which are attended by one hundred and fifty boys, who receive instruction in Arabic and English, and who will easily find subordinate positions in the Government Offices; and, lastly, a third consisting of workshops, where artisans are trained.

In view of the great schemes of irrigation projected by Sir William Garstin, which, as I have already explained, will be almost exclusively executed in the Sudan (but for the greater benefit of Egypt), and which will extend over several years, it is certain that a large number of young men having an elementary knowledge of geometry and construction will be

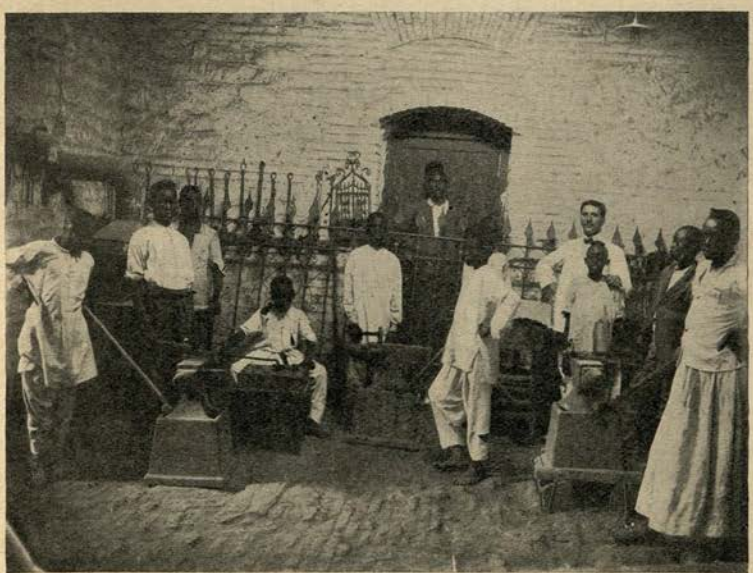
required, and it has been decided to considerably increase the schools. The intention, I believe, is to establish a secondary school, two other primary schools, and to enlarge the classes of the Gordon College.

Interesting as were the classes for the Sheiks and those of the native children, I admit that it was the workshops for the young artisans which interested me most. The facility with which they learn to imitate all that is shown to them recalled to me the similar talent of the Chinese and Japanese. Last year the work turned out by the eighty pupils of these workshops, children of twelve to sixteen years of age, brought in over £200.

It is evident that the Gordon College is a very powerful factor for civilisation, and that it will play an important *rôle* in the future of the Sudan. Other schools have been opened at Omdurman, Wadi Halfa and Suakim, and the inhabitants of the numerous villages seem disposed to pay a monthly education tax in order to procure one. Research laboratories of great importance are attached to the Gordon College. These have been established through the generosity of Mr. Henry S. Wellcome, their objects being :

(1) To promote technical education ; (2) to promote the study, bacteriologically and physiologically, of tropical disorders, especially the infective diseases of both man and beast peculiar to the Sudan, and to render assistance to the officers of health, and to the clinics of the civil and military hospitals ; (3) to aid experimental investigations in poisoning cases by the detection and experimental determination of toxic agents, particularly the obscure potent substances employed by the natives ; (4) to carry out such chemical and bacteriological tests in connection with water, food-stuffs, and health and sanitary matters as may be found desirable ; (5) to undertake the testing and assaying of agricultural, mineral, and other substances of practical interest in the industrial development of the Sudan.

Directed by a scientist of great worth, Dr. Andrew Balfour, these laboratories, which are admirably fitted up, render daily the greatest services, and without doubt will play a most important part in the development of the country.



WORKSHOPS, GORDON COLLEGE

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The restricted compass of this volume forbids me, much to my regret, from writing further in regard to the Gordon Memorial College. I should like to have described the up-to-date classes, the dining-halls bright and well-kept, the model kitchens, the most interesting museum, containing specimens of the products of the Sudan, &c., &c. Only a word: Mr. James Currie agrees entirely with Lord Cromer that the teaching of English in the Sudanese schools would be disastrous.

"It is a curious but undoubted fact," he said to me, "that as soon as a native changes his dress—I speak of Arabs, and the civilised Sudanese, not of the Shilouks and savages—as soon, I say, as he changes his native costume for European trousers, he becomes in appearance an ape. The study of English has on his intelligence a similar effect to that produced by trousers on his person: in a word, he ceases to be a man, and becomes a ridiculous being, half monkey, half parrot. We teach English in certain classes because we require for subordinate Government appointments a number of employees who know this language, but we are absolutely opposed to its being taught in the artisan classes, and in the elementary schools which we have opened or will open throughout the entire country. It is not by teaching them a few words of English that we shall draw the population closer to us, but in governing them with wisdom and firmness, kindness and justice; and in proving to them that we are working for their good."

I had no intention of attempting to describe the Sudan and its progress in four chapters, but I have simply attempted to give those who are ignorant of it an idea of the work accomplished. Some will, no doubt, ask, what at first seems difficult to explain, viz.: why is the Sudan *Anglo-Egyptian*, and how is it possible that a country can belong at one and the same time to two masters, King Edward and Khedive Abbas Hilmi?

This same question was put to me by an Italian friend on board the boat which brought me back to Europe, and our conversation will explain the situation as well as anything I could say.

"The English give as a reason," I said, "that above all they desired to have the Sudan free from the famous 'capitulations.' In fact, if the Sudan had been simply Egyptian,

it would have been equally under the sovereignty of Turkey, which again would have meant that all the nations who were signatories of the capitulations would have had the right to erect their Consular Courts in the country. Very wisely, in my opinion, England wished that the innumerable difficulties which have strangled Egypt for so many years, and which even now hinder her work of civilisation, should be spared to the Sudan."

"Then," remarked my friend, "England is proprietor of the Sudan on joint account. You have told me that it cost Egypt a few hundred thousands each year . . . does England not pay half that bill?"

"No, and for an excellent reason. England does not seek to draw any direct personal advantage from the Sudan. All these immense works which will be undertaken on the Upper Nile will benefit Egypt and her agriculture. They will double, triple perhaps her wealth, but not that of England. The advantages which the latter draws from the situation are: (1) To have under her rule an Egypt rich and prosperous, where English capital and commerce will find a ready outlet, but equally with all other nations; (2) To have an immense field of study and training for her officers and administrators; (3) To prevent any other nation establishing itself on the Nile; and (4) To hold Egypt much more surely and irrevocably than if she simply occupied Cairo. Note that she has given for the reconquest of the Sudan £800,000 and seven or eight thousand men, and that it was English officers who, having reconquered, it, have also pacified it, and led it to the point where it to-day is on the road to civilisation and progress."

"Then you consider England works for . . . ?"

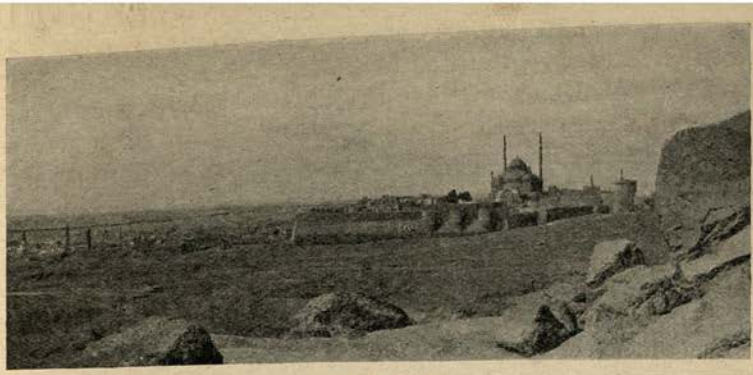
"Egypt? Naturally."

"Egypt!" My friend whistled with an incredulous air, and added: "In former days they said, 'For the King of Prussia!' . . . Hum! . . . I cannot see the English working for that, but the explanation they give is certainly very plausible. There is nothing more to be said of it than 'Si non è vero, è ben trovato!'"

I believe that, in spite of all that England will say, and all that I have repeated, her reputation is not so blameless that

many will not continue to say, with the mouse in Lafontaine's fable: "Ce bloc enfariné ne me dit rien qui vaille . . . attendons!"

Let us wait and see. That will not hinder the Sudan from progressing rapidly under the protection of the two flags which for the present float together from Wadi Halfa to Gondokoro.



CAIRO CITADEL

CHAPTER XVIII

SOCIETY IN KHARTOUM

Society in Khartoum—Lady Wingate's garden-parties—Slatin Pasha's dinners—The *fêtes* in honour of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Connaught—Scarcity of ladies—The young officers dance with one another—The paradise of marriageable daughters—Expulsion of the *demi-mondaines*—Oh! for a Sapho!—Black and white and white and black—The English officers have no relations other than official with the Egyptian officers—They are "separated by a gulf which no number of whiskies and sodas can ever bridge"—The English officers' preference for the black soldiers.

YES! Society—with a large S, please, for Society has its rights even in the Sudan. Certainly the amusements of Khartoum are neither so numerous nor so varied as those of Cairo; still one manages very well, and there is no reason to be bored. In imitation of the "Palaces" of Cairo, the Grand Hotel gives . . . I shall not call them balls, but let us say "hops." These take place on Saturday evenings, and are preceded by a dinner more ambitious than good. Many English officers attend, whilst the foreigners invite on these evenings all those whom they know. The large dining-room is crammed, and the hotel must fill its pockets, judging from the fabulous quantities of empty bottles which one sees.

At the first of these "hops," in which I took part, there

were present nine ladies; at the second only seven. The stronger sex was represented by a hundred or so of uniforms, amongst which one saw here and there a black coat. That must be shockingly slow, I thought to myself, if only nine couples dance at a time in that immense room, and then all these men will be fighting to obtain the hands of these unfortunate ladies, only half of whom are still at an age when one dances in civilised countries. And wisely I retired to the terrace to smoke my cigar in peace. Suddenly, I was aware that from the ball-room there was proceeding an extraordinary noise, which certainly could not come from nine couples of dancers. The music (and it was powerful military music too) was almost drowned, swallowed up in the frightful roar of a frantic stampede, to which was added the sound of wild cries. "The devil!" I said to myself, "a battalion of ladies must have arrived, and now every one can dance. I must look at this." Ladies! yes, certainly, there were just nine who were dancing for all they were worth, but who were only responsible for a very small fraction of the noise. It was the officers, who, in default of lady partners, were dancing with one another; lieutenants, captains, majors, even colonels in full war-paint, medals, decorations and all, ran, hopped, bounded, hustled and bustled in the wildest quadrille I have ever seen. Officers, did I say? Well, they were really just great big infants of twenty to fifty years of age, laughing, shouting and enjoying themselves like a party of children.

In a corner of the room the native servants of the hotel wriggled and twisted with laughter at the sight of this spectacle, which doubtless vaguely recalled to their minds the Dancing Dervishes of their native land. Amongst the keenest of the dancers was Slatin Pasha, and he, certainly, must be pretty near the fifties. The former prisoner of the Mahdi is really extraordinary; his twelve years of awful torture have left no visible trace. He enjoys a youthfulness, a strength and a freshness quite incredible. The simple and sober life which he led throughout his captivity has evidently suited him; but to-day, I can assure you, he is making up for lost time. Slatin is at all the *fêtes*, and two or three times a week he gives large dinner-parties at his house. Think for a moment of the pleasure

this man must experience when, after having eaten for years with his fingers the food of slaves, he now presides in his large and lovely dining-room over dinners at which are served the choicest dishes, drinking exquisite wines, and waited on by numerous servants, liveried to perfection. His house, recently built in the centre of a superb garden, is, I believe, the most pleasant and well-equipped in Khartoum. Here he has gathered round him every possible comfort, and, according to what he

SLATIN'S HOUSE

himself says, there is only one drawback, and that is that housekeeping gives him a lot of trouble, and that he loses much time in looking after his servants.

"Well, my dear Slatin, why not marry?"

"No!" he replied. "I'm too old for that now."

"Get along!" I said, "you are as fit as a three-year-old."

But I have a strong suspicion that Slatin, as far as he personally is concerned, is an enemy of marriage. He himself tells us in his book that the Khalifa, wishing strongly that he should marry, sent him on several occasions a woman . . . whom he refused always. That was a good story to put in a book published in pious England; but he does not claim for his continual refusals any extraordinary virtue, but attributes them rather to the fact that his master regularly sent him

the most horrible old negresses that he could lay his hands on.

One day, when Slatin had invited me to join him in an excursion on the Nile on board the Government yacht, I referred to this delicate subject.

"Well," I asked, "were they really all so ugly?"

"No," he replied. "One time they made a mistake, and sent a young and pretty one."

"Which you kept?"

But Slatin was not to be so easily caught.

"Oh!" he replied, "it was shortly before my flight. . . . I say, look at that splendid bird over there!"

We must not be too curious, but let us rather declare from the house-tops that the ex-slave, now Inspector-General to the Sudan Government, sent back the young beauty just as he had sent back the old horrors . . . and besides, after all, it is his affair and not ours.

There is one thing, however, which Slatin does admit, and that is that he has been a cannibal . . . and has nibbled with his teeth a human hand. Ugh! that makes one's flesh creep! But listen to the story, it is short and to the point.

During the time of his Governorship of Darfour, when he was struggling with all his might against the growing power of the Mahdi, in the course of a terrible march provisions fell short, and he had eaten nothing all day. Half asleep in his tent, he thought he could hear the sound of his men eating. . . . He called one of them, and asked him what they had found. "Oh!" he replied, "we have found some chickens." "Well, you rascal, bring me a piece at once!" In the darkness they passed him something cold, which he commenced to bite, but after a few seconds he began to wonder what part of a chicken he had managed to get. Striking a match he saw to his horror that it was part of a human hand, a hand which had belonged to a corpse which his men had disinterred! He then remembered that amongst his troops were several negroes who belonged to a tribe of cannibals called Nyam-Nyam. Surely a suitable name! Nyam-Nyam! . . . one can hear the teeth burying themselves in the flesh . . . boo!

Let us turn to something more agreeable. I trust that my

THE NILE AT OMDURMAN

Venieris

description of a "hop" at Khartoum will be read by many young ladies, and I know of very many who pass their time in the winter in Switzerland, dancing amongst themselves for lack of cavaliers. If at Khartoum there are twenty gentlemen to one lady, I am quite convinced that at some of these Swiss winter resorts there are forty ladies to one gentleman . . . and he does not weary, I can assure you.

Khartoum! There is the paradise of young ladies and young wives *comme il faut* . . . the other kind are taboo. Certainly there are officers who sigh sometimes for the heroine of Daudet's famous novel; but the paternal Anglo-Egyptian Government looks well after them, and any European *demi-mondaines* who find their way there are packed off without ceremony and threatened that they will be conducted to the station, *manu militari*, if they do not depart quietly themselves by the next train.

Ah! I can assure you there is no chance in the Sudan of singeing your wings at the light of the lady who sells her favours . . . as to those who give, well, that's quite another thing. They are very welcome, especially if they have good letters of introduction. Hardly has she arrived before a lady is surrounded by admirers who place at her disposal their horses, donkeys and camels, and who include themselves willingly in the offer. She can dance, play tennis and croquet, ride in the desert, row on the river or sail or steam, hunt, fish, flirt as much as she pleases—only—and there comes the rub—marriage is difficult, unless she is well endowed with the world's goods. In fact, the Government, still paternal, will not allow its English officers in the service of the Sudan to marry unless means are plentiful.

Well, you may ask, if these unfortunate officers are not allowed to marry, nor to play with *demi-mondaines*, what can they do? They cannot always be dancing with one another. That is a delicate subject.

When the Dervish Chiefs had been slain, the unfortunate women whom they had fed and housed and protected came to the victors, saying, "What shall we do?" The representatives of civilisation naturally could not say to them, "Seek another master, we shall help you to find him." Slavery had

to be abolished at a stroke, and so they were calmly told, "But you are free, quite free; go away, go!"

With what result? The great majority of them, unable to gain a livelihood, became prostitutes. As the Khalifa alone had over four hundred concubines, and as his Emirs and officers each possessed a very respectable quantity, the number of these can be imagined. That, I suppose, is one of the blessings attendant on civilisation.

SHAIGI GIRL Turstig

I remember well what the late Grand Moufti said to me on this question: "It is a mistake to think that the slaves were unhappy, or that slavery was cruel. What was terrible about it was the manner in which the slaves were first obtained; the raids of the slave dealers by which they stole the unfortunate natives, whom they drove in huge gangs to the markets where they sold them. The masters treated their slaves well. It was to their own interest to do so, and I can assure you that the life of these women was neither unhappy nor immoral."

It must not be imagined that the only attraction of Omdurman is its native beauties, more or less virtuous, whose costume consists of a short fringe hanging from their waists, and heavy bracelets and necklets of gold. No—Omdurman is from many points of view an exceedingly interesting city to visit. It is one of the largest towns in Africa, although it has a population of only 60,000, whilst in the time of the Mahdi it boasted 400,000.

The markets of Omdurman are celebrated, and long caravans of camels coming from the rich provinces of the South, as well as numerous boats, bring to them each day the products of Central Africa. Gum, cane, doura (a kind of wheat used by

men, and also as food for cattle), grain, cotton, ivory, ostrich feathers are to be found spread over huge spaces in the market-place. It is a curious sight to see these immense caravans of camels arrive after a journey of weeks and weeks, bringing from out the centre of the Dark Continent their enormous loads. To me the camel appeals, by contrast perhaps with the two-legged specimens, male and female, which one meets in one's lifetime, and to whom unjustly is applied as a term of reproach the name of this hard-working beast, sober and enduring.*

The time is not far distant, I believe, when a line of railway will link Omdurman with the provinces of Darfour and Kordofan, whose richness is very great, and which can produce enough doura to nourish the entire Sudan, besides leaving a large balance for export. The quantity which in Kordofan can be obtained for 4*s.* costs £1 2*s.* 6*d.* in Omdurman, which proves conclusively that the only means of transit at present available, viz., by camel caravans, is more than costly.

There are also at Omdurman markets for horses, donkeys and camels, and the bazaars are most interesting. Here are to be found Sudanese weapons and arms, ostrich eggs, curious purses of leather which the women carry suspended by a string round the neck, fringed belts of leather which they wear round the waist, wicker baskets in bright colours, carved ivories, riding switches and whips of hippopotamus skin, and an entire street given up to the makers of silver goods. Bracelets, rings, charms, seals, boxes, even serviette rings, of curious and bizarre workmanship, but for which more is demanded every day. Here as elsewhere the appearance of the tourist has been the signal for putting up prices.

One can spend morning after morning in these bazaars and markets. It is like another world, a different planet for the stranger; and it is only when he passes in front of the shop of a native tailor, where a dozen or so of Singer's sewing-machines are busily humming, that he realises that after all he is not so very far away from civilisation.

At Omdurman there are some monuments which are historical: the ruins of the Mahdi's tomb, the house where

* In French the word "chameau," *i.e.*, camel, is applied to a person as a term of the vilest opprobrium.

Slatin lived as a slave, and a large building in which are gathered together many relics of the past: pistols, guns and swords belonging formerly to the Dervishes, and the strange head-dresses which they wore: of these there are thousands which can be had very cheaply. A little further on are the cannon of the Khalifa, cannon taken from Hicks or at Khartoum, and, lastly, the carriages and the piano belonging to Gordon, in a pitiable state. I must admit it was with a shock that I saw there, under a shed, these relics of the hero who fell at Khartoum. Surely a resting-place could be found for them on the unoccupied ground-floor of the Governor-General's Palace.

At the side of the empty tomb of the Mahdi rises the house occupied by the Khalifa, his four wives and his many concubines. His apartments can only be reached after traversing a labyrinth of passages almost without end, and each turn in which was guarded by a sentry, so great was his fear of assassination. The house unfortunately is empty. It would have been interesting if it had been left just as it was when he took to flight, as it would then have constituted a most interesting Mahdist museum. I must say I admire the brave man who, like the Khalifa, has the talent and the power to conduct harmoniously a *ménage* consisting of some four hundred and four wives, of which four were legitimate, and had equal rights—rights which they could make respected, as behind them they had the force of their religion, which commands the husband to treat each with the same kindness, the same generosity, and the same affection. The days and the nights of their lord and master were equally divided between them; and what must have happened to the tranquillity and harmony of the harem if, perchance, he had the audacity or the bad taste to desire wife No. 2 on the day which belonged by right to No. 4? That is the reverse side of the medal, for as there is nothing which bores the male nature more than custom, it is a hundred to one that the husband should occasionally wish on Monday what ought only to come to him on Wednesday. The legitimate wives, on the contrary, have the right to postpone the visit of their master. Of course, they would not think of saying to him, "You worry me, do go!" that would be too *fin-de-*

siècle, but simply, "I am fatigued. Oh! my lord, make then that one of thy four hundred slaves come for thy amusement." Nothing could be simpler.

Calm and peaceful, the population of Omdurman goes about its work, does its business with Egyptians or Europeans, and sends its children to the excellent schools opened by the Government. Who would believe that barely seven years ago it was the centre of the most terrible religious fanaticism? Fanaticism and despotism, from these the population had suffered, and they had had enough of the Mahdi, of the Khalifa, of the Emirs, who seized everything, lived in the lap of luxury, leaving the wretched human mass to die of hunger, whilst now and then massacring a certain number to show their power. The fanaticism of the Dervish is a thing of the past, and he appreciates to-day the tranquillity which he enjoys, and the justice which ensures to him the reward of his toil.

Makhmoud explained this to me in his own fashion.

"Dervish man, Sudan man, Arab man, all glad and love English because English master he just. Poor man find Moudir, Moudir listen, give justice even against rich man, even against English man."

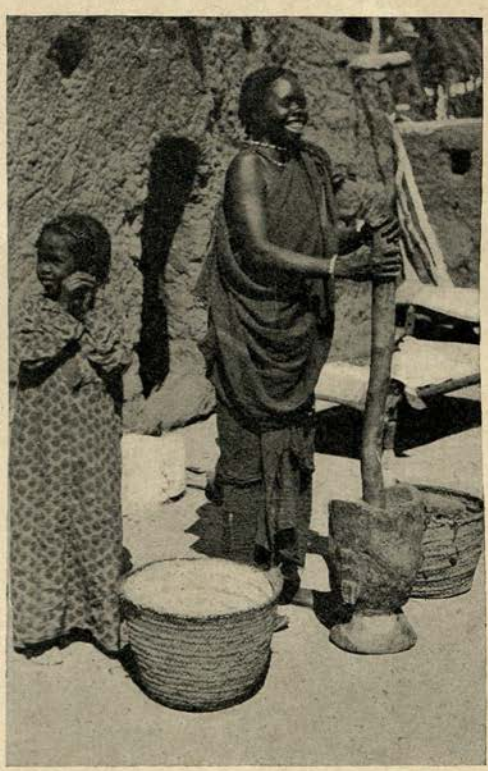
I believe Makhmoud; the times have changed, and the people do not regret it.

Let us return to Khartoum. On the river you shall find a steam ferry, which crosses at regular intervals during the day the confluence of the two Niles; and if you have neither horse nor donkey, you can take the curious little steam tram which will carry you to the centre of the town. A regular god-send is this little tram, due, like the other up-to-date things of Khartoum, to Colonel Stanton. This energetic man would even banish the dust, of which Khartoum is not proud, and upon my word I believe he will do it . . . some day when he finds a little more spare cash in his box. He has, in fact, found an excellent means of ridding the avenues of dust by "gumming" them. For this purpose he uses the residuum of gum which can be had for very little, and roads thus treated remain firm and dustless. The "gumming" of the whole of a large avenue only costs £40.

Money and water, these are what Colonel Stanton desires:

water above everything, for only that is required for the desert which surrounds Khartoum, in order that trees, shrubs and flowers may grow with extraordinary rapidity. In the gardens on the banks of the Nile one can raise strawberries, peas, beans, every vegetable imaginable during the whole winter . . . but the hotel gives you none of them!

There are at Khartoûm two clubs, an English and an Egyptian. The officers of the two countries in the service of the Sudan Government do not fraternise. An Englishman said to me in regard to this: "We are separated by a gulf which no number of whiskies and sodas consumed in the course of official duties can ever bridge."



GRINDING DHURRA Beam

Here, as in Cairo, they see each other officially: in the office, intercourse is easy and pleasant; whilst talking business they will discuss a whisky and soda, or a cup of coffee, and smoke a cigarette; then each goes his way to his club or his home, and there they know each other not, except from time to time when they meet at an official reception or a dinner-party. Even that is unusual, for the Governor-General gives separate dinners and receptions, some for the English, others for the Egyptians. I remember my surprise when, at a ball given at our hotel by

the "Egyptian Cavalry," I saw only English officers and their guests, amongst whom there was not a single Egyptian. The latter certainly resent the way in which they are treated by the English, and I repeat here what I have already said in another chapter, they are feared, respected, admired, but they are certainly not loved.

What are their reasons for thus holding them at arm's length? They have been given to me thus by an Englishman:

"We can work together, we can fight together . . . we can never live a family life together. The Egyptian will never present us in his home to his wife or his wives, unless in the case of a few very modern young men who have married a Levantine or European mistress of rather tarnished reputation. Why should we then admit them to our houses, and introduce them to our wives and daughters, knowing as we do that their ideas in regard to women, and their fashion of behaving towards them, are totally different from ours? That is the principal reason which separates us from the Egyptians. But it is not the only one. Their customs, their manners, their notions of hygiene, their ideas of morality are quite opposed to ours; and lastly, my dear fellow, we like bacon for breakfast, and they don't!"

The English officers take an interest in their Egyptian soldiers, and work hard to turn them into good fighting material, because it is their duty and they are paid to do it, but for their men they have not the slightest affection. On the contrary, they love the black Sudanese, whom they consider born soldiers, although difficult to keep in hand. These are not troops for garrison work, but for the field, and something must be continually done to keep them occupied. The blacks detest the Egyptians, whilst they are devoted to their English officers. That is an interesting fact. If ever Egypt or the Sovereign State of Turkey had a fancy to claim from England the Sovereignty of the Sudan, to-day shared between them, the black troops would be found ranged round the "Union Jack," and only too delighted to have something to fight, especially if that something were an Egyptian.

Have you ever heard of a "Diluka"? I had, vaguely. I knew that it was a savage dance, where negresses, young and

well built, almost naked, gave themselves up to the most fantastic contortions and motions. I had heard that with the help of the music and the shouting they worked themselves into a frenzy, and that this state of excitement communicating itself to the onlookers, the negroes, yelling, hurled themselves into the midst of the dancers, and a scene then took place beside which the dances of Cairo and the Moulin Rouge are innocent.

One day, Cook's agent offered to organise a "diluka" in one of the native villages situated in the Desert some distance from the town. All that was necessary was to send a certain sum to the Chief. The idea was hailed with delight by the tourists, male and female, who happened to be at the hotel, and who, one fine afternoon, set out on horseback, donkey-back or 'ricksha, every one, even young girls, who carefully carried their cameras with them.

Very excited at the thought of the saturnalia we were going to witness, we galloped across the Desert towards the village, whence came a formidable noise of drums and tom-toms. What a disappointment! A few ancient negresses clothed (fortunately!) from head to foot in dirty black cotton, raising one foot after another, and modestly wriggling. Furious and disgusted, we declared to the interpreter that we should complain, and demand the return of our money. After these threats, a few young negresses were produced, showing from the folds of black calico nothing but their heads, feet and hands. A "diluka" in such a costume—that was the height of absurdity. Leaving aside all other considerations, it is certain that the only artistic interest of this dance comes from the poses and movements full of strength and suppleness of the young well-formed bodies of the dancers, movements and poses which it was impossible to follow under the folds of black calico. I will go even further, and say that, thus costumed and deprived of its artistic side, this dance, far from being more proper, takes a low character, and becomes full of suggestiveness without any redeeming feature.

Two or three soldiers on police duty mounted guard. I made the interpreter explain to them that it was evident that we had been swindled, and that we would claim the return of

our money. They replied that on account of the police regulation enforcing, under pain of imprisonment, all the Sudanese of Omdurman and Khartoum to clothe themselves, the dancers did not dare to appear in the simple girdle of fringed leather which was the proper costume for the dance, and which they were wearing under the shawl of black cotton. We offered these brave interpreters of the law a "backsheesh" to induce the Sudanese to discard their shawls. Delighted with this unexpected windfall they rushed into the arena, where, after many explanations and much noise, they proceeded with their own hands to undress the performers. But the latter would consent only to the extent of fastening their shawls about their waists, and twisting and turning their bodies in an idiotic fashion.

Thoroughly swindled, we made our way back to the hotel, convinced that the Sudan was becoming very rapidly civilised. To forbid the "diluka" is well enough, but they might also forbid the swindling of the tourists, whom they permit to pay a large sum to the village Chief.

I shall finish this chapter on Khartoum Society at the point where I should really have commenced—with the Palace, since Sir Reginald and Lady Wingate are the pleasantest, most hospitable and charming hosts in Khartoum. Every traveller who has been recommended to their care retains very pleasant memories of their kindness, also of the luncheons, dinners and garden parties, which are given at the Palace, the great charm of which is the entire absence of formality, the simplicity and cordiality which reign there.

The garden parties, which take place almost each week in winter in the lovely Park of the Palace, are quite free from the stiffness and ceremonial which official functions generally assume. The Governor receives his guests in a flannel suit and panama hat, and his officers, as well as the guests, follow his example. Tea and refreshments are served under a large tent, where the Governor-General and Lady Wingate themselves look after their friends.

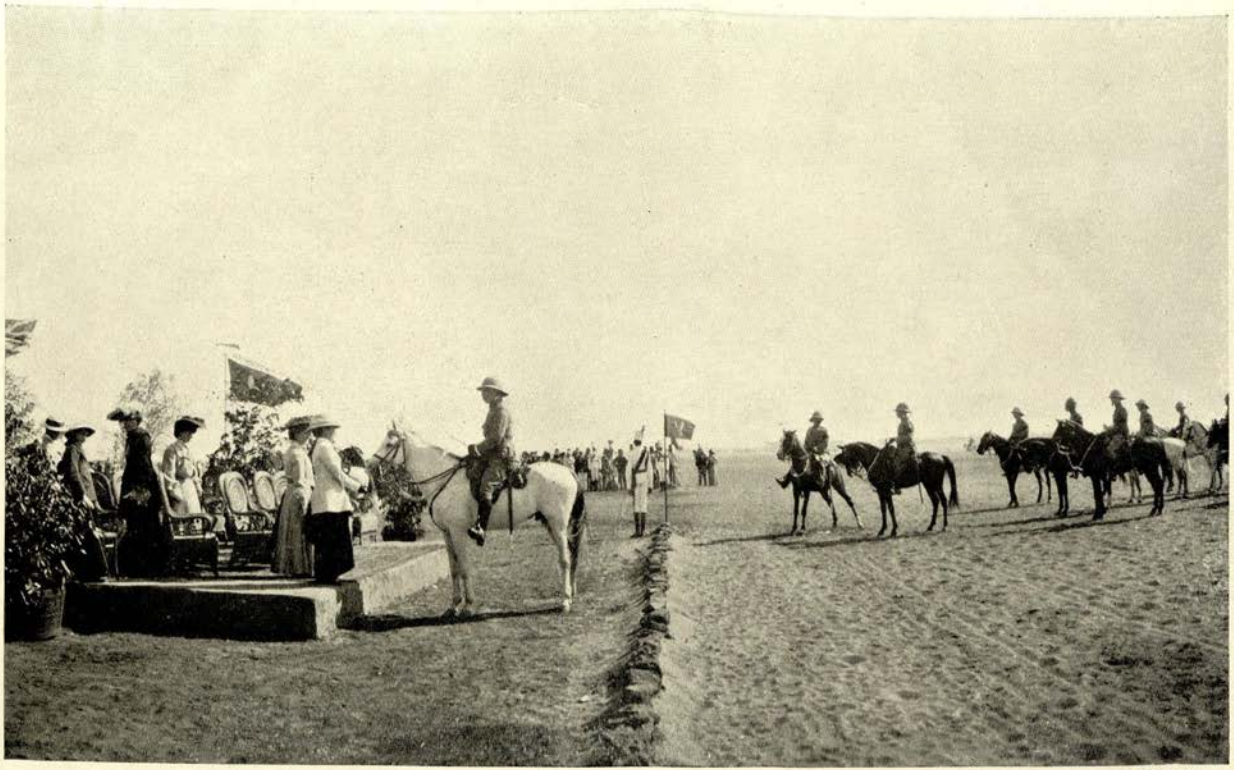
A military band, stationed a short distance away, plays well-known airs: and whilst some talk, walk and smoke, others play at tennis or croquet. One might imagine oneself in the

garden of some country-house in Europe in the summer, were it not for the tufted palms scattered here and there, the black soldier musicians, and over there, in the midst of the shrubs,

Marques Fiorillo

GORDON'S STATUE

the statue of Gordon, which recalls the terrible crisis of yesterday. Seated on his camel of bronze, very natural, very lifelike, Gordon faces the South from whence his enemies came, and turns his back to the North from whence he hoped to receive that help which never arrived.



Al Vista

H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT AFTER THE MILITARY REVIEW AT KHARTOUM

I was present in the Park of the Palace at a *fête* which impressed me vividly, that given by the Governor-General and Lady Wingate in honour of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, who, accompanied by the Princesses Margaret and Patricia, came last winter to spend a few days at Khartoum. On the day of their arrival a reception was given in the Park, to which were invited all the members of the Government, the English and Egyptian officers, the Mussulman Sheiks, the Sudanese Chiefs, and the strangers passing through who were acquainted with General Wingate.

On my arrival I saw that, in one of the most charming spots in the Park, just opposite the Palace, an open tent had been erected for the Princesses and Lady Wingate. On the left, in front of another large tent serving as a "European" buffet, the English and foreign guests were grouped. On the right, there stood yet another "Arab" buffet, before which were the Egyptian officers, and at their side, in picturesque robes and turbans, the Mussulman Sheiks. Here and there were pickets of Sudanese soldiers, immensely tall, and black as ebony. Suddenly the band struck up "God Save the King," and the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Governor-General and Lady Wingate, the Princesses, young, elegant, charming, appeared, followed by a brilliant crowd of officers.

Just a garden party, you will say! Yes, certainly, but it is the frame in which it is set which must be considered. We are met under the blue sky of the Sudan, on the spot where Gordon fell, in an ideal Park verdant and fresh, where birds are mingling their songs with the sound of the military music. Look at these Sudanese Chiefs, the representatives of the people who, only yesterday, thought of nothing but massacre; look at them now as, smiling and satisfied, they bow before the brother of the King of England, and before the representative of the Khedive, General Wingate. Look at this peaceful and charming scene, where cool white toilettes mix with uniforms covered with decorations, and the robes of the Mussulman Sheiks, in the shadow of the statue of Gordon, avenged! Look, and, full of admiration, you will repeat what the Duke of Connaught himself said to me: "Is it not admirable? Khartoum in six years has become a large and beautiful town!

the entire Sudan is pacified, and all that accomplished by a handful of men with very limited resources. It is marvellous!"

The programme of the *fêtes* given in honour of their Royal Highnesses comprised other attractions, regattas, a Horticultural and Agricultural Exhibition, a military tattoo, when, by the light of thousands of torches, the united bands of the English, Egyptian and Sudanese regiments gave a monster concert under a sky studded with stars, reflected on the waters of the Nile. Lastly, there was a military review.

This took place beyond the town, on the threshold of the Desert, and I shall never forget the magnificent spectacle. Infantry, cavalry, artillery, Egyptian and Sudanese, marched past in perfect order, then the mounted troops and artillery returned at the gallop in a furious charge, raising in thick clouds behind them the sand which had felt the footsteps of the regiments of Ibrahim and of Gordon, and of the wild hosts of the Mahdi.

"What do you think of it?" an English officer, who stood at my side, asked me.

"Frankly," I replied, "they are excellent soldiers on parade, they are superb; and if their fighting qualities are equal to their appearance you have every reason to be proud."

"Well," he said, "I also will speak frankly, and I will say this: they are excellent troops, and we have done our best to bring them up to this point. But you must not think that in doing this we have not been helped by the Egyptian officers. Most of them work with a perseverance and a zeal which is indefatigable, and they are undoubtedly capable of commanding their own men, but—look there!"

Between blue sky and yellow sand a line, almost invisible so like was it to the colour of the soil, advanced like a great snake, with a quickness, a swing and an energy almost incredible. These were the seven hundred men of the English regiments stationed at Khartoum. There was about them such a strong, virile, martial appearance that a great emotion seized me by the throat, and I felt inclined to clap my hands and shout "Bravo!" as when, at the finish of a review at Longchamps, the cavalry sweep down in a furious charge. What does it matter that these soldiers are young, what does

it matter that their khaki uniforms fit badly, when the bodies that they cover are animated by unshaken will and energy, by intelligent courage, cool and calculating, against which the charges of the Dervish fanatics, who knew no fear, broke like waves against a rock ?

It was wonderful. . . . Calm as statues, not an Englishman amongst the spectators seemed to notice it.

Al Vista

TAUFIKIA

CHAPTER XIX

TWENTIETH-CENTURY COMFORTS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Voyage on the White Nile—The comforts of the twentieth century in savage lands—Steam-yacht, electricity, baths, and douches—Excellent cooking and iced drinks, surrounded by crocodiles, hippopotami, in sight of lions, elephants, and buffaloes—Hunting extraordinary—Negroes and negresses—Dinkas and Shilouks—A race of giants clad in an ivory bracelet—Their manners and their dances—A prince and his wives—"Do not clothe them"—"Honi soit qui mal y pense."

It is certainly something nowadays to be able to travel to Khartoum whilst enjoying during the course of the journey every possible comfort, but how many people are aware that this journey can be extended into the centre of Africa none the less comfortably? Leaving aside the Blue Nile, which one can ascend as far as the highlands of Abyssinia, one can to-day reach Fashoda, Lado in the Belgian Congo, and Gondokoro in Uganda, as easily as though these towns were situated on the Seine or the Rhine—the only difference being that they are further off, and the journey takes more time. Gondokoro is about 2700 miles from Cairo. In fact, one can to-day ascend the Nile to spots still haunted by crocodiles, hippopotami, lions, elephants, giraffes, buffaloes, and rhinoceros, passing through countries inhabited by the wild tribes of the Shilouks

and Dinkas, a land where, only yesterday, a Stanley or a Marchand alone could penetrate, after surmounting the greatest difficulties, in the midst of innumerable dangers, and at the price of terrible privation and suffering. I repeat, this voyage can now be accomplished in the same security, and with the same comforts, as that from Cairo to Assouan. Needless to say, it is a thousand times more interesting, and as to the climate it is in winter simply ideal.

Before describing how I, personally, did the journey in what is undoubtedly the pleasantest manner, but also the most expensive, I will explain briefly how it can be accomplished in other ways. First, I shall dismiss the service established by the Sudan Development Company between Khartoum and Goz Abu-Goma, situated at a distance of only one hundred and eighty miles. The voyage lasts six days over the most uninteresting portion of the White Nile. The steamer, which is new and very comfortable, has much too great a draught, and runs a strong risk of going aground on a sandbank, as happened last year, half way on the voyage, where she lay for several days—anything but a pleasant experience for the passengers!

The Sudan Government has a much more important monthly service. Its boats ascend the Nile into Uganda as far as Gondokoro, a distance of some 1100 miles from Khartoum, and occupy a month in performing the double voyage. The price of the ticket is £67, and the steamer is provided with electric light, hot and cold baths, and food and attendance which could not be better. There are numerous halts, varying from thirty minutes to two hours, and for those who simply desire to see Central Africa, the Sudan throughout its entire length, and a corner of Belgian Congo and Uganda, this service supplies the easiest means towards attaining their end.

I cannot, however, recommend it to those who wish to enjoy sport, for the halts are not long enough, and, naturally, it is not round the landing-stages on the banks of the river that one comes across game, large or small. For sportsmen, the only satisfactory method is to hire a boat and halt when and where one wishes. The steamboats are naturally the most comfortable, but they are also, and very much, more expensive.

The native sailing-boats can be had at a very reasonable price, and ascend the river almost as fast as the steamers, as the wind blows strongly and steadily from the north during the winter months. Coming down against the wind of course takes longer, but, if in a hurry to get back, the traveller can at close intervals get the chance of a tow from a Government steamer.

Whilst I was at Khartoum, an Englishman, a great hunter, accompanied by his wife, left for a two months' trip into Central Africa. They had two *naggars* (native boats). On the largest

SIR REGINALD WINGATE AT KAMA

of these a tent of native matting had been erected in the middle of the deck, containing two camp bedsteads, toilet table, chairs, &c. The cook and the servants were astern. The second boat carried four camels, six donkeys, some native servants, and a shikari, the last thoroughly acquainted with the ways of all the big game, and the spots where they were likeliest to be met with. There were also on board tents and camp equipment, so that with their camels and donkeys they could quit the boat and undertake shooting expeditions in the interior lasting several days, choosing the places where elephants and the other large fauna were plentiful.

At the same time, two Frenchmen, from Rouen, left on a short excursion of a fortnight. I saw them on their return, and they were in great spirits, having bagged some 1500

head of game, of which several were fine specimens. Not having time to make expeditions into the interior, they had hired only one boat, and had taken with them neither donkeys, camels, nor camp equipment. This trip had cost them £27 a week (£13 10s. a piece), boat-hire, linen, food, servants, all included.

The larger expedition, with two boats, camels, donkeys and camp, mounted up for two persons to £40, or £20 per head. Naturally, the more numerous the party, and the longer the trip, the less is the proportionate cost.

For all these expeditions the intending traveller should address himself to M. Angelo Capato, whose huge shops at Khartoum contain everything one can require, and who undertakes the organisation of sport or pleasure parties at fixed and very reasonable rates. His is a firm in which every confidence can be placed, well-known for its honesty, so that no difficulty or unpleasantness need be feared.

Sportsmen must obtain a permit. Government issues two, the lesser costing £5, and the greater £40. The first allows of the shooting of lions, crocodiles, wild goats, tiangs, gazelles, small antelopes, ducks, pelicans, swans, herons, ibis, bustards, cranes, and a quantity of smaller game, furred or feathered. Only the larger permit allows the right of shooting elephants, hippopotami, buffaloes, elands, large antelopes, &c.

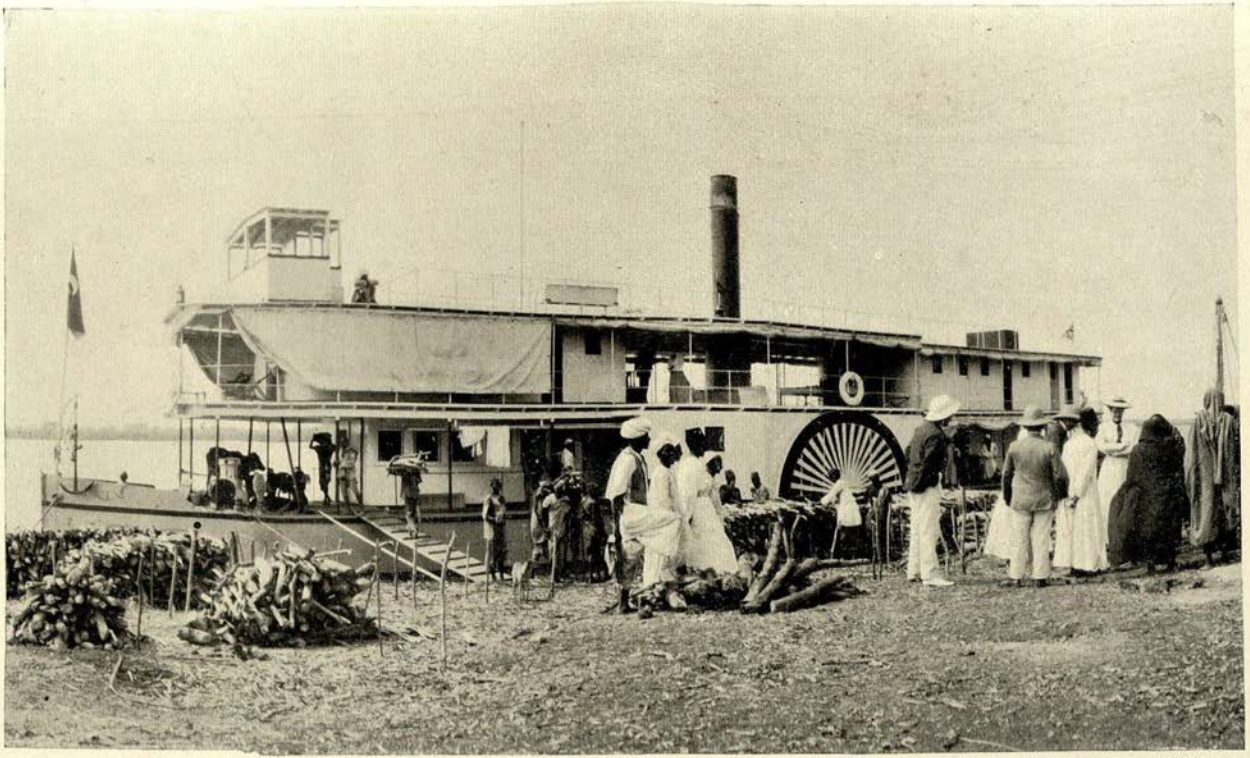
The sailing-boats naturally afford only a relative amount of comfort, and those who wish to enjoy a greater should hire a steamer, in which case the simplest plan is to write direct to the Government, or rather to Commandant Bond Bey, the pleasant and obliging Director of the Department of Boats and Steamers. This is what I myself did; and with six friends, three of whom were ladies, we hired the *Abbas Pasha*, a large and beautiful three-decked steamer. The hire was £20 per day for boat and crew. For the rest we applied to M. Capato, who provided us with an excellent European cook, a Sudanese under-cook, servants and all necessary provisions. A veritable grocer's shop was installed on board, containing preserved goods, white and red wine, champagne, Münich beer, large quantities of mineral waters, brandy, whisky, and various liqueurs. All that remained over at the end was of course

taken back by M. Capato, but the famous Sudan thirst was the cause of the emptying of a phenomenal number of bottles.

We carried in the bottom of the hold over 5 cwt. of ice, which lasted us a week, and as M. Capato continued to send it on by different steamers ascending the Nile, on one day only did we run short. On the fore part of the lower deck we had quite a farmyard: a cow to provide fresh milk, sheep, lambs, hens, turkeys, pigeons, which were killed according to the requirements of our kitchen. Telegrams had been sent to different points, at which we found awaiting us fresh fish and vegetables, eggs, &c. One can see from these details that our table was abundantly supplied. Servants, food and drinks cost £10 per diem, altogether including hire of the boat, £30, or £4 6s. per day per head,* a small amount considering the comforts which we enjoyed, and that we were undertaking a voyage into the centre of Africa.

The *Abbas Pasha* is a large boat, which had just been repainted and redecorated on the occasion of the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, who had made use of her for numerous excursions. On the lower deck, in the stern, was the dining-room; amidships, the engines and quarters for the crew, and forward, our stores, farmyard and poultry-run; on the main deck, a drawing-room, ten large double-berthed cabins, two bathrooms with douches, and, as on board Cook's boats, a large space in the centre of the deck, and extending to its full width, where were placed tables and easy-chairs, and where we generally took our meals. Over this there was still another deck, which, occupying the entire length of the boat, made an excellent promenade, and at sunset our ideal stand-point. Saloons, cabins, decks, all were lit by electricity, and one can no longer doubt the possibility of having every comfort possible on the White Nile. The two weeks' voyage on board the *Abbas Pasha* were full of interest and charm, of which the following notes will give only a very faint idea.

* It must be noticed (1) That it would be possible considerably to economise in the cost of the food. (2) That the price of the boat, being the same for ten or fifteen persons as for seven, friends travelling in a larger number than we did would naturally find it cheaper.



Al Vista

OUR BOAT "THE ABBAS PASHA"

"*February* 9, 1905.

"We left Khartoum yesterday morning, and we are all delighted with the beginning of our voyage. Cabins, service, food, all are perfect, and we jog along, joyously and luxuriously, towards the centre—yesterday how mysterious!—of Central Africa. It is delightfully warm, and we have donned sun-helmets and white ducks. The scenery is far from wild. All day yesterday we passed through immense stretches of pasture, where thousands of oxen, cows, calves, donkeys, sheep and horses peacefully browsed. On the great and majestic waters of the river, flocks of wild duck disported themselves, and we could see further off on the banks thousands and thousands of wild geese, pelicans and ibis.

"This morning early, as we were leisurely making our toilettes, Mahkmoud from the deck shouts, 'Crocodile! Master, Crocodile!' An extraordinary effect is produced by this word 'crocodile.' In a second, all seven of us, men and women, are out of our cabins, in costumes more than light, gazing anxiously in the direction indicated by the black finger of Mahkmoud. At first we can make out nothing, then suddenly we shout in chorus, 'There, there, look on the sand, just the same colour. .... Ah! the brute, he is sleeping in the sun!' And there, true enough, on the yellow sand of the bank, we see an enormous crocodile, lying basking like a lizard. At this sight the murderous instinct is awakened, first in Mme. Z., who cries, 'Your guns, quick, your guns!' Then the three of us who have come prepared for the chase rush off shouting, 'The guns, Mahkmoud! Mahkmoud! Wallad! Lord, where are those guns? quick, and the cartridges!' But the guns were in their cases, the cartridges in their boxes; and as the *Abbas Pasha* continued peacefully on her voyage, the crocodile was lost to sight long before we had ceased to cry, 'The guns, the guns!'

"This crocodile, whose skin was spared, had at least awakened in us all our lust for blood, and we passed the forenoon in preparing our small armoury. One eye on our guns, the other on the river banks, we searched the sands with cruel and anxious eyes; but they were as innocent of crocodiles as the quay of the Louvre, and we began to have serious doubts as

to the genuineness of the one we believed we had seen in the morning!

"At midday we halted at a village, to take in, not coal, but wood. As the former costs £12 to £16 a ton, the steamers on the Nile burn only the latter. This explains why the country through which we passed, and which, a few years ago, was densely covered with forest, is now almost entirely destitute of trees. Whilst a small battalion of negroes brought the wood on board, singing and shouting, we took a turn round the village, seeking our first impressions of the Dark Continent. In little huts of straw, entire families were living, crowded and mixed up with their goats, sheep, hens and miserable dogs, thin and emaciated. Only old women were to be seen, hideous and withered, and little children quite naked, very dirty, and almost without exception suffering from horrible eye-diseases. These terrible old negresses claim to be daughters of Eve (Oh! Eve, what colour wast thou?), of whom they have the inborn love of dress. They adore necklaces and rings, and their woolly hair is divided into hundreds of little greasy plaits. In front of one of the huts we watched at the hair-dressing of a lady whose wrinkled charms seemed to us to have belonged to a bygone age. Another woman was engaged in plaiting the little tails, pulling hard at the crinkly hair . . . it seems that the operation is a painful one, and lasts almost an entire day. Mahkmoud entered into conversation, and presently announced, 'This woman get married, get ready to marry!' Heavens, then there is still hope for some old maids I know, if they will only come here where husbands are so easily found!

"A little further on, a young woman, more pleasing to the eye, and whose figure was somewhat nearer to our standard of beauty, worked furiously, grinding doura between two flat stones, converting it into flour. Little by little, all the women in the village became aware of our presence, and arriving *en masse* we were quickly surrounded. We men did not seem to be of the slightest interest to them. White men they had often seen, and probably considered them exceedingly ugly; but the ladies who accompanied us, that was a sight quite out of the ordinary! These pretty white dresses, these embroidered blouses, these hats with ribbons and flowers,

these elegant sunshades, these dainty boots of white leather. . . . Poor negresses, their woman's instinct seemed to tell them that all that was very pretty, very chic . . . and they came still closer, full of admiration and respect.

"Now it was the fair hair, almost like gold, curled, waved, scented, which attracted their attention, and which seemed to fascinate them. But as we turned to make our way towards

Sanderson

AFTER-DINNER PIPE

the boat, one of the ladies of our party, raising her skirt rather high, exhibited the laces and frills of a petticoat, one of those dainty Parisian creations, the *frou-frou* of which had never been heard before in these parts. Then all these negresses threw themselves on the ground in order that they might have a better view, entreating with outstretched hands that they might be permitted to touch this exquisite and rustling stuff. And the petticoat! Where had it come from? From Doucet or simply from the Bon Marché? Who knows?

"'For my part,' said V., 'I can quite understand the excitement, these petticoats always affect me!'

"'And as for me,' said M., 'I am only sorry these negresses

are so terribly ugly, otherwise I might come back next winter with a cargo of petticoats. What a success I should have!'

"'Ah! my dear,' said one of the ladies, whose short skirt, guiltless of a *frou-frou*, had gone unnoticed, 'it is not their looks I should object to were I a man, but their perfume. Let us go. I am feeling quite ill.'

"Certainly the perfume of a Sudanese is somewhat strong and enduring . . . but they, again, are unanimous in declaring their objection to a European.

"At three o'clock we arrived at El Duem, one of the largest towns in the Sudan, and the point where Hicks' army quitted the Nile, and advancing into the country, then in a state of revolt, was annihilated. The Governor of the town, Major Butler, along with another English officer, informed of our arrival, came to meet us, and took us off to visit the bazaars. A huge crowd followed us, evidently intensely interested. On all sides the traders assailed us, brandishing ostrich feathers, daggers, swords, Dervish spears, ostrich eggs, curious water-bottles, some in terra-cotta, others of leather with ivory stoppers. All seemed gay and happy. And yet, seven years ago, El Duem was, like Khartoum, a centre of bloodthirsty fanaticism. To-day everything is calm, and the two English officers who live here have, to enforce the laws on this population of 10,000 inhabitants, exactly seventeen native policemen. It is wonderful! Innumerable caravans of camels bring hither enormous quantities of gum, which is then sent on to Omdurman by boat.

"We have just witnessed the arrival of such a caravan, the camels of which, dusty and tired with their long journey, give unmistakable signs of their pleasure at arriving. Of their own accord they kneel down, and patiently wait for their heavy loads to be removed, two enormous leather sacks full of the beautiful gum of which the head-man offers us large pieces, proud of its fine quality.

"After taking tea with us on board the *Abbas Pasha*, the Governor left, and we only awaited the return of Mahkmoud, who had been sent to buy ostrich eggs, before continuing our journey. Suddenly we heard a frightful din, and saw approaching us from the town an immense crowd, shouting

and gesticulating, seeming to pursue a negro clothed in white. They overtook him, and several men throwing themselves on him, bore him to the ground. He managed to rise, and, taking off his slipper of red leather, he struck the face of his principal assailant. This is the greatest insult, it seems, which exists in the Sudan, and, profiting by the stupefaction of the others, he resumed his way in our direction. The crowd once more took up the chase, and again, a few yards from the boat, threw themselves on him. We had looked on, indifferent, at this scene, which we did not understand, when, suddenly, we recognised the fugitive, and a cry of astonishment and anger escaped us—'Mahkmoud!' It was indeed he, my faithful

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CAMELS AT EL DUEM

follower, and two hundred black devils throwing him on the ground and surrounding him. This time our guns were handy, and seizing one I fired . . . in the air. The effect was magical. The shouting crowd was silent, and fled in headlong haste. Alone, the man struck by Mahkmoud remained, grappling with him.

"At this moment the Governor, attracted no doubt by the report, reappeared, followed by two or three police. Mahkmoud having said a few words, he gave a couple of hard cuts of his riding-whip to the man, and ordered that he, along with Mahkmoud, should be conducted to the station, where the dispute might be settled. He very kindly came on board, and explained the affair.

"'An egg which your man was buying fell and was broken. Payment was demanded, but he asserted that it was the seller

who had allowed it to fall. Nothing more serious than that, and in a few minutes we shall see who was in the right.'

"'In the meantime,' I said, 'the other has had two smart lashes with the whip.'

"'And your servant has been thrown down, and beaten. . . . It was to punish him for having stirred up the crowd against your man, instead of coming and lodging a complaint, that I struck him.'

"'They are not really vicious?' I asked.

"'Not a bit, they are just big children, but one must know how to handle them.'

"'Do they give much trouble?'

"'Very little. Now and again, one of them, in a fit of rage, kills his man . . . we hang him, and that's an end of it.'

"Mahkmoud returned, indignant; he had been condemned to pay for the egg. According to the Governor's report, all the witnesses had sworn that it was he who had broken it.

"'Of course,' he said to me, 'all men—Dervish men, all friends, all against me. Ah! filthy country, dirty Sudan, never come again! Dirty Dervish men!' Poor Mahkmoud, beaten, and, to add insult to injury, obliged to pay ten piastres!

"*February* 11.

"What excitement and emotion these last two days! Yesterday morning, loud cries of 'Hippo! hippo!' We rushed forward, and there in the middle of the river, we perceived something which looked to us like a torpedo boat without a funnel. It was an enormous hippopotamus. He raised his mighty body from the water, opened an immense mouth, and plunged. It was superb. Hardly had we recovered from this little excitement than some one shouts 'Crocodiles! the guns!' This time we are prepared; three of them lie on a bank of sand, asleep in the sunshine. Each of us takes aim, and, bang! Two are hit; their long bodies twist in a terrible spasm, and with a supreme effort they make one fantastic bound, and sink in the water.

"'Stop! Stop!' we cry to the engineer, 'we have got two.'

"'Ah!' he replies, 'they are at the bottom of the Nile

by now, and even though they are dead they will not come to the surface for eighteen to twenty hours. It is always like that, and, unless you have plenty of time to wait or manage to hit them somewhere where the water is shallow, ninety-nine out of a hundred are lost.'

"For the last thirty-six hours we have seen so many hippopotami and crocodiles that we have become *blasés*, and we no longer take the trouble to get up to look at them. The river is full of the first. They bathe, or plunge, or allow themselves quietly to drift with the stream. Sometimes they are single or in groups of six or seven or eight, at other times there is a family—father hippo, mother hippo, and all the little hippos. They are so enormous that at a distance we take them for small islands.

"As to crocodiles, we have lost count. We have passed hundreds since yesterday, and although we have shot some fifty we have only managed to secure one, a small one, which, although having its head smashed by two explosive bullets, fought with the utmost fury against our men. Now his skin is hung up to dry in the sun, and he smells almost as strong as a Sudanese.

"The way in which our crew threw themselves into the river to fetch the crocodile was superb; absolutely fearless. They have no fear of death, and it is with a laugh that they will say of a man, as they do of a crocodile, 'He is finished!' This is a favourite expression. An officer once told me how when he had shot a large bird which had fallen into the Nile, one of the boys who was with him swam out to fetch it, and was devoured by a crocodile. The other smiled, and said quietly, 'That boy finished!'

"We are all seated forward, gazing through our glasses at the Nile and its banks, the aspect of which is continually changing. At certain points it forms small lakes with islands which are covered with myriads of immense birds with long beaks, their plumage white and red, or white and grey, of which we have seen millions. Their numbers are so great and so compact that, as far as the eye can reach, we cannot see the ground. The country, at first pastoral, becomes now more wooded. Monkeys can be seen swinging amongst the branches, and here

and there we pass a village of small huts. When we stop for fuel, the negro women come to the bank, dancing and clapping their hands.

"The sunsets are perfect, indescribable. In Europe one has no conception of the wild savage grandeur of the light effects which the sun produces as it sets. The superb orb becomes an enormous ruddy ball in a sea of flame, the colours gradually die away, and whilst the West is still illumined, the East is black as night. The Nile appears as a river of fire,

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SUDANESE FAMILY AND HUT

where, like huge black patches, the hippopotami glide majestically on.

"We remain on the upper deck, steeped in this wondrous spectacle until darkness falls; then, immediately after dinner, we return once more to enjoy the sight of the heavens decked with stars which seem so much more numerous, so much more brilliant than in the North, and which are mirrored like points of gold on the silver waters of the Nile. Every night swinging across the firmament we see the Southern Cross. At this season of the year the natives set fire to the brushwood which grows along the banks to a great height, in order that the fresh young grass may be able to sprout. Here and there these immense fires stretched along the river for a distance of some miles,

whilst we glided on between flaming banks, throwing their tongues of fire upwards into the night. The effect was wonderful, and the contrast striking, when, the burning mass left behind, we entered once more into the darkness, where, alone, burned the stars, and on each side of us, sombre and mysterious, lay the forest, echoing now and then to the roar of a lion.

"*February* 14.

"The night before last we anchored alongside the boats of Mr. F., the Englishman who, with his wife, as I already mentioned, had started from Khartoum on a long hunting expedition. A third boat, belonging to Colonel J., a friend, was also there, but, to our great surprise, we found Mrs. F. alone with her Sudanese servants.

"'My husband and the Colonel,' she explained to us, 'started on camels two days ago for an elephant hunt; they will not be back for two or three days yet.'

"It seemed rather astonishing. We were in the centre of Africa, a few hours only distant from Fashoda, and this white woman, alone amongst her blacks, was waiting tranquilly and without fear for the return of her husband. It looks as if these savage countries were less dangerous for the fair sex than the civilised.

"'I am very glad that you have stopped,' said Mrs. F. 'You have your guns, I suppose? You would do me a great favour if you would kill the lion that has been prowling round here for the last two days, and which is frightening my servants out of their wits.'

"A lion! . . . just what we were looking for! So we called a council of war, and our Shikari explained to us that the lion at dawn retired into the interior of the country, sometimes to a great distance. We had then to start before sunrise, taking the donkeys with which Mrs. F. provided us, and one or two of her men.

"Ah! Tartarin, of joyous memory, if you could only have seen us setting out!

"Through the scrub, across the woods of reddish trees whose branches, armed with long thorns, tore our clothes and pricked our flesh: over a country parched and covered with

large fissures, we advanced with surprising speed, filled with a desire to see this lion face to face. A lion! . . . that was something to tell our friends about! Perhaps we should have engraved on our cards:

"'*Lion-hunter.*'

"That would impress the public, and no mistake! At last we arrive before a vast gully covered with high grass, when, suddenly, from the middle of this sea of scrub, there rises a fearsome roar. . . . It is HE! Our donkeys tremble . . . we also . . . they with fear, we with excitement.

"'Um!' says the Shikari, 'he is *very hungry!*'

"Some one nudges my elbow: it is Makhmoud. Have you ever seen a negro grow *pale?* I swear Makhmoud was pale . . . it was very unbecoming, and his eyes were starting out of his head.

"'Master!' he whispered, 'dangerous, very dangerous . . . last year my brother——'

"Makhmoud, you can tell me that later. . . .

"But he still kept on behind me. 'Lion kill English captain, very dangerous . . . aim well, oh! my master!'

"Down there we could see the high grass bend at the passage of the King of Beasts, and a second roar made the whole place ring.

"'He is very hungry,' repeated the Shikari, whilst he made his way quickly towards the wood on our right. 'We must get there before he passes.'

"We set off once more, and at the entrance to the wood we dismount. With finger on trigger and watchful eye, we advance under the wood, not green but red as the coat of a deer. One can only see a few yards ahead, and any moment we may come upon him.

"'Lord!' cries H., suddenly, his nostrils dilated, 'I smell him!' And he was right . . . the warm heavy air of the wood was impregnated with the odour of a wild animal. There was no mistaking it.

"'He has beaten us,' said our Shikari; 'he has passed already, we must follow him.'

"At this moment one of our beaters was seen making frantic signs to us. We ran towards him, when he pointed out

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THE AMERICAN MISSION ON THE SABOT RIVER, CENTRAL AFRICA

to us the fresh spoor of a buffalo. 'He must be a big 'un,' said our Shikari, 'and he cannot be far off . . . but your permits don't give you the right to kill him.'

"'Forward, forward!' cried H. 'Death to the buffalo! I shall pay all the fines possible. I don't mind prison, but I must have that buffalo!'

"As with lovers no amount of reasoning will prevail, so with a hunter, especially when he has in his nostrils the mingled scent of lion and buffalo. We set off, following the tracks. We marched and marched, sweating through every pore, and bleeding at every point where a thorn had entered.

"Whisht! . . . It was another beater this time, who signed to us to approach the edge of the wood. We ran, and there, some seven hundred or eight hundred yards off, we saw in an open space a huge herd of large animals with horns. . . . Antelopes! Then came the question: do these belong to the class which we have permission to shoot? Frankly, we know nothing whatever about them. . . . We could not have told if the beasts had been ten yards from us, much less eight hundred.

"'To the devil with the permit,' said H., 'with the help of Heaven I shall taste roast antelope to-day, cost what it may!'

"We advance cautiously through the brushwood, but, at five hundred yards from our game, it ceases, and the huge space separating us from the antelopes is absolutely bare. There is no time to hesitate, another step and they would sight us. We must fire from where we are, a good quarter of a mile. 'Bang! Bang!' . . . the guns sing out, and at the same moment the entire herd, bounding away to the right, disappears . . . we are done! But, hardly have they galloped a couple of hundred yards before they halt . . . have they seen the lion? . . . Turning round, they dash back in front of us, but still at that five hundred yards range. Fire! and, oh! joy! two of them bite the dust . . . but one, springing up, makes off, wounded in the leg. At least we have bagged something, certainly it is not a lion, but, all the same, it is better than nothing . . . or a cap, O Tartarin!

"I await Mahkmoud, who has stayed behind in the wood with the donkeys, and when I rejoin my companions after the fall of the antelope, it seems to me that they are looking rather

sourly at one another. H. comes to me and whispers, 'Did you ever hear of such an idea? That brute has the cheek to say that it was he who killed the antelope; why, I'm certain it was my bullet that brought him down!'

"Now, upon my word, these English are superb! It never entered the head of either one or the other that it was *I* who had killed it! I said nothing, for I was not quite certain that this antelope belonged to the species which we were allowed to shoot . . . and if there was a fine to pay I would let them fight for the honour of disbursing the sum, as each was so certain of having sped the fatal bullet.

"But the funniest part was to come; for on our return their friend, Mme. *Z.*, said to me:

"'Well, I am pleased you did not meet that lion.'

"'Why?' I asked.

"'Simply because I don't know what sort of shot you are, but I do know that neither of your companions could hit an elephant at ten paces!'

"That, of course, was exaggeration—a little scratch from the feminine claw, but, all the same, I was mightily pleased, and if it had not been for the thought of that confounded fine of £100 (and three months of prison!) I should not have hesitated in declaring that it was I, and I alone, who had slain that antelope.

"Tartarin, O celebrated hunter, what do you think of a country where, before breakfast, one hears and *smells* a lion, follows the spoor of a buffalo, and comes on a herd of a hundred antelopes, as big as mules? Think of the sport these fortunate folk can have who are not so pressed for time as we.

"Yesterday at mid-day we landed at Fashoda, but we did not stay long, for several reasons. First, the heat was infernal; and secondly, the Governor, Commandant Matthews, whom we had much hoped to meet, had left for an excursion on the Sobat. We hope to run across him, or perhaps see him on our return journey.

"He is one of the men who has worked hardest at the civilisation of the Sudan, and has taken his work so much to heart that he refuses the holidays to which he has a right. Afraid lest his health should suffer, the Government last

summer *ordered* him to spend several weeks in Europe. It is with men of this stamp that England has conquered the greater part of her vast possessions.

"Fashoda! Picture to yourself a flat desert of yellow sand, in front of which lie malarial swamps. On the marsh land, high grass shelters millions of mosquitoes and flies (and such flies!). On the sand to the left is a cluster of round huts, the dwellings of the Shilouks; on the right some ugly brick buildings, the quarters of the Governor, his offices and the Post. It would be impossible to find a spot more desolate, more depressing, and more unhealthy. In front of Commandant Matthews' house, built on the site occupied formerly by Marchand's fort, a few poor yellowed palms sadly shake their withered heads. One would almost think that they were mourning for the brave officer who himself planted them after having unfurled his flag.

"Notwithstanding all this, we desired to land. Heavens! what words could ever describe the heat of Fashoda? The soil was cracked in a thousand deep fissures, from which there came a burning air as if from the centre of the earth, and which baked us from beneath upwards, whilst the sun, which no shade dimmed, cooked us from above down. It was terrible. I marched in front, and, feeling this hot air from the crevices mounting up my legs by way of the foot of my trousers, I suddenly thought of the ladies with their skirts. I turned and saw them; their faces were red, almost apoplectic, and with an indescribable expression of anxiety caused by the diabolic sensation which had seized on them from head to foot.

"'Ah!' said one feebly, 'I think I've seen enough of Fashoda. Do let us get back on board!'

"We returned, and found the thermometer, which had been in the shade since the morning, registering 106° Fahr. I placed it in the sun, but in a moment the mercury had bounded up to the limit of 131°. On that day it registered 140° at Fashoda, and not the shadow of a shade!

"*February* 16.

"Early this morning we arrived at Taufikia, an important military post situated a little below the junction of the White

Nile and the Sobat, a large river flowing from Abyssinia. After Fashoda, this place seemed delicious. Situated somewhat above the river, it can boast of acacias and some lovely palms. Near the landing-stage are several large brick houses occupied by the Government Offices, the Governor, the Post, &c. A large and fine avenue, planted with palm-trees, leads to the native village, which is composed of fine huts with

PANORAMA OF

domed roofs. The whole gives one the impression of great cleanliness.

"On each side of the avenue are native shops, or bazaars, belonging to Greeks. Here and there are enormous heaps of doura, surrounded by negroes who have the greatest difficulty in keeping at a distance the ostriches, which walk freely round, and are desirous of sampling the grain. In the evening the English officers stationed here, and whom we had invited to dinner, organised in our honour an extraordinary dance. The night was black as pitch when we made our way to a vast space, the drill-ground, I suppose, where we could just make out large dark groups of men and women, beating furiously on huge drums. As if by magic the place was suddenly illuminated, lit up by a large number of torches held by black

soldiers. The group near which we found ourselves was composed entirely of men, who danced and leaped, shouting and yelling.

"One of their dances represented a serpent hunt, and the manner in which, terrified at the sight, they took to their heels, returned, fled again and returned again, was most realistic. Then followed a war dance, in which they attacked

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FASHODA

with spear and club an enemy, whom we had the honour to represent. Charging furiously, brandishing their arms and shouting their war cries, they stopped within a foot of our breasts.

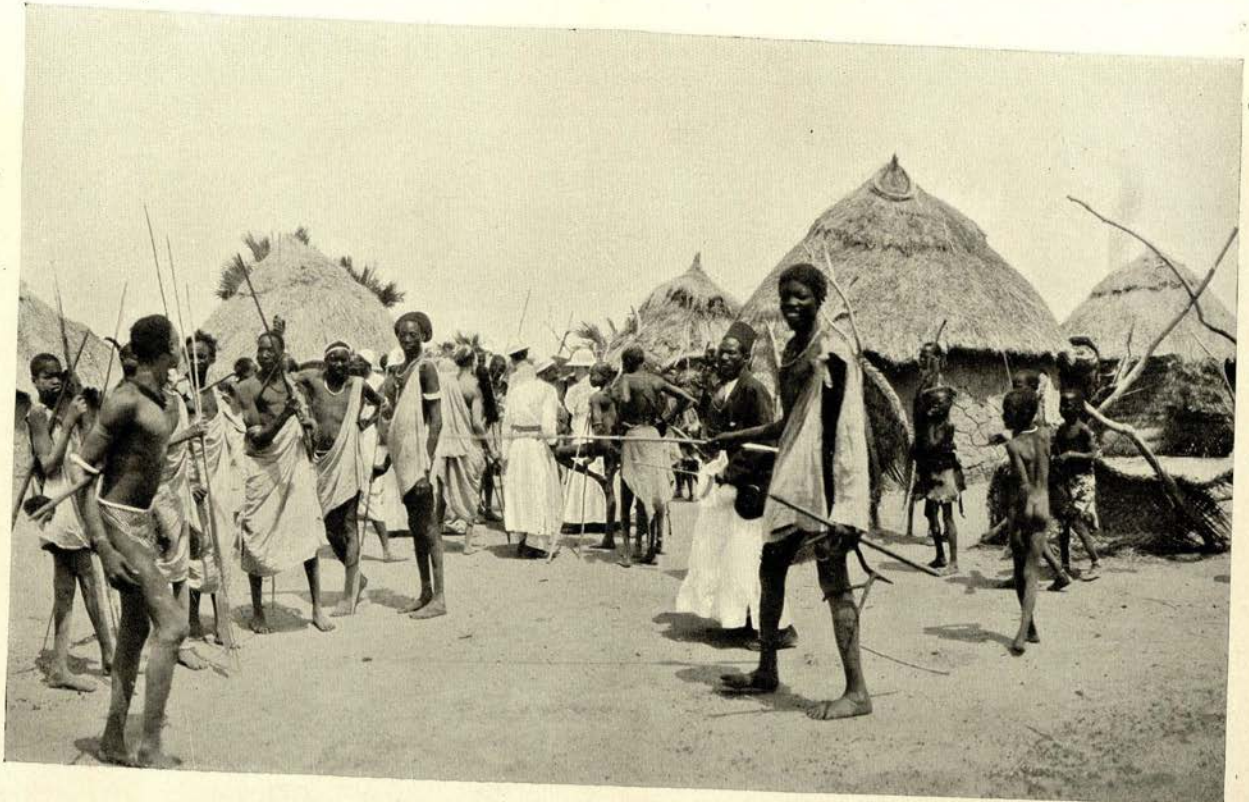
"A second group was composed of horrible old negresses, enveloped in long black garments, with greasy heads and faces, and whose dance consisted of strutting about in imitation of geese. With the head thrown backward and breast stuck forward, they proceeded with shut eyes, wagging their heads like Chinese figures, and uttering curious little cries. As to the odour which these dirty black garments, never washed, and full of vermin, emitted, I think I prefer geese. Why, in the name of decency, are they made to clothe themselves? It only means the encouragement of dirt and stench.

"We did not stay long before this group, but passed on to another, where men and women danced together, and precipitated themselves, one against the other, with extraordinary fury. Two Arabs were dancing here amidst the negroes and negresses, and, being engineers on board a boat, they wore caps and blouses, which made them look like a couple of Alphonses on the outer Boulevards! But the most extraordinary of all these dances was that in which negroes, of immense height, leaped into the air, straight from the ground, well over the height of our heads, as if they had been shot up by an invisible spring in the ground. The effect was most amusing.

"It was in honour of our visit that these dances had been organised, but it was for their own pleasure that the natives executed them. They love the movement and the noise, and play about like children. Long after we had left they continued to dance and shout, and when at last we arrived on board after having visited the Officers' Club, we could still hear them.

"To-day, leaving the Nile, which, a short distance from this point, penetrates the great marshes of the Bar-El-Gazal, we ascended the Sobat towards Abyssinia. Here the river is uninteresting, flowing between flat and monotonous banks; but it is on these banks that the famous Shilouks live, some of whom we had already seen on the White Nile, and whose closer acquaintanceship we wished to make. This is one of the most powerful tribes in the Sudan, and, in regard to appearance and manners, one of the most interesting. The men are immensely tall, many of them reaching a height of seven feet or more. Broad-shouldered and with powerful limbs they are as a rule astonishingly thin, but in no way disagreeable to look at. Their walk, very lithe and active, has something of the cat about it, which strikes one immediately.

"At the first village of importance we gave the order to halt, and whilst the work, rather a difficult one, of mooring the big boat was taking place, the entire population left their huts, and clustered on the banks of the stream. What a picture! The men were for the most part naked. Their costume consists generally of a huge ivory bracelet on the arm,



ENGLISH LADIES "SHOPPING" IN A SHILOUK VILLAGE

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above the elbow, and one or two narrow strings of beads round the body. These strings of beads are formed of small pieces of the shell of ostrich eggs, strung together like pearls, and are rounded and polished by rubbing them for hours, days, and even weeks, against a rock.

"Thus 'clothed,' and unashamed, they come to the bank, flourishing their murderous looking spears in one hand and their clubs in the other. At first sight they look terrifying, but the expression of their faces is not bad; on the contrary,

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SHILOUK SETTLEMENT ON THE SOBAT RIVER

it is a mixture of curiosity and distrust, with something childish and good-natured thrown in.

"'Hullo!' some one cried, 'they are not all niggers, look! is it possible? some of them are grey, and others yellow, and there are some red. Look at that fellow, where in all the earth did he get a skin that colour?' Needless to say, it was not natural, but due to an extraordinary custom they have of rolling themselves in ashes, after having greased their bodies, in order to protect themselves from the stings of flies, mosquitoes, and other insects, with which their villages are infested.

"Ashes! Yes, that explains the Shilouk grey, but what about the Shilouk red? That is really quite simple, he is a rich man who possesses cows. Do you understand? Shilouk grey has rolled himself in the ashes of wood because he is poor and has no other; but Shilouk red is wealthy, and he has rolled himself in the ashes from his fire of cow-dung, which accounts

for the diabolical colour, also for the odour, which is guaranteed to keep even the most famished insect at a safe distance!

"And yet another Shilouk; black this time, with a mop of hair of fiery red. Cows again, but in another way, which I should hardly care to recommend to these dainty Parisians who love this colour.

"From the upper deck we examined these superb giants, whose heads specially attracted our notice, firstly, on account of the formation of the skull, which was not that of the African negro; and secondly, because of the extraordinary methods of dressing the hair. It is worth while making the journey to see a Shilouk head-dress. A happy mixture of ingredients indispensable to the toilette, cow-dung, gum and clay, make a paste which, applied to the hair, gives it when dry the consistence of thick felt. In shaving the head here and there, and cutting the felt at the desired places, almost any imaginable form can be obtained.

Turstig

SHILOUK HEAD-DRESS

"So in front of us we have a Shilouk, whose head, seven feet above the ground, is surmounted by a wig with the appearance of a huge fan, or in another a cockscomb, whilst a third prefers long excrescences which look like horns or asses' ears. The effect is extraordinary, fantastic, and terrifying. A few have the head shaved, but it is rare, and is generally due to an illness or an accident. At first sight one would come to the conclusion that these extraordinary heads of hair had exhausted the supply

of capillary nutriment, as on their naked bodies not another hair is to be seen. But such is not the case. On their bodies hair grows as with us, but every one is carefully plucked out as soon as it appears.

"Amongst these giants of varied colours we saw here and there a woman, who, though of medium height, seemed very small. They are pleasant, well-made, and intelligent looking. All have the head shaved, very white teeth, and from the age of puberty they hide a part of their body with an antelope skin. This they drape so as to cover one breast, and the lower part of the body, leaving the other breast free. Virtue in their women is much appreciated, and in the case of young girls up to the time of their marriage it is guarded by an extraordinary custom, which, however, as I am not writing a book for anthropologists, I shall not attempt to describe.

"It was in the midst of this crowd that we landed, our hands full of sweets, cigarettes and small mirrors for the women. At the sight of these gifts, the Shilouks uttered cries of delight, brandishing their clubs and spears. After having lavishly distributed our presents, we asked them to sell to us some of the ivory bracelets which they wore on their arms, as well as the strings of beads which they carried about their loins, and some spears and clubs. They only parted with these with the greatest regret, at a relatively small price, and they examined with considerable suspicion the silver which we gave them, and of which only the ten and twenty piastre pieces were familiar. Gold they absolutely refused.

"However, once the bargain was made, they insisted on shaking hands, having, as a preliminary, carefully spat on theirs! They are also fond of offering a pull at their pipes, which they smoke whilst sucking lovingly at the stem.

"Whilst surrounded by a dozen or so of Shilouks, I was bargaining for an ivory bracelet, I suddenly felt an awful pain, a regular dagger thrust in the centre of my back. I gave a sharp cry, whilst the thought struck me: 'Now we are done for, they are killing us with their spears!' But no! and when I tell you that it was nothing more than the sting of a fly about as long as the thumb, and which had pierced my garments, you will probably say, 'What a fuss about nothing!' And

I shall reply, 'That is exactly what Lord Kitchener said when he came to Fashoda, and saw certain of his officers, bitten by these flies, jump and yell. 'Old women,' he called them. But one day they had their revenge. The General-in-Chief, seated at a large table, was working hard, when suddenly a loud cry and a formidable oath were heard, and the table with all its contents was thrown to the ground. One of these famous flies, passing under the eyes of Lord Kitchener, whose sight is not of the best, had landed on his nose, and then ! . . .

"Having bought all we wished, we returned on board, and made our way to where, a short distance further on, the American Central African Mission have their station on the Sobat. The missionaries have chosen a high lying piece of ground on which to erect their comfortable brick houses, surrounded with palms. The drawing-room, simply but comfortably furnished, in which we found rocking-chairs, recalled to us an American home, and we felt at once at our ease with the missionaries, three gentlemen and one lady. The wife of one of the others had, a few hours before our arrival, given birth to a child, and we were entrusted with the announcement of the news to the missions at Luxor and Cairo. There is another child of about two years of age, born also at the mission, and who was duly presented to us, but who no longer can claim, as formerly, the title of 'the only white baby on the Sobat.' The missionaries explained to us that, thanks to the abundant rainfall in summer, the land here is productive without the need of any irrigation works. They themselves have plantations of cotton, fruit, and vegetables, with which they are very satisfied. Alone in the midst of the Shilouks, they live on the best of terms with these giants, who possess no religion but the 'cult of the Father of their Race,' who has led them hitherto, and to whom they appeal in moments of need or danger. The missionaries do all they can to interest them in work, but up till now without much success. The Shilouks are indifferent and lazy, and being able to live on very little, they desire to work only sufficiently to obtain what they need.

"At 3 P.M. we stopped at the village of Khorfluis, where the Shilouk Chief, Okokwan, has his dwelling. He is also called by some Prince, and by others King. I believe he is the son of

a Chief who was King of the Shilouks, and who was killed by the Dervishes.

"Okokwan, escorted by his body-guard, came to visit us. His long legs being unaccustomed to mounting stairs, it was with some difficulty that he reached the deck, where we seated him in our best arm-chair. He and his guards have their heads shaved, and are draped in white cotton shawls, that of the Chief having a fringe of pink. Having had considerable intercourse,

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PRINCE OKOKWAN AND HIS RETINUE

more or less official, with the English, he has a vague idea of the meaning of the word 'decency.'

"I willingly admit that, although a firm opponent of the clothing of the masses of these savages in rags, which quickly become filthy, I was not annoyed on this special occasion to see that this giant Prince had covered his nakedness in order to seat himself in the midst of our three ladies, who loaded him with presents. Silver rings, knives, cigars, a looking-glass, the Chief accepted all with a dignified and satisfied air, handing them over to one or other of his guards.

"We offered him lemonade, aerated (kindly give no spirituous liquors to the savages!), of which he quaffed two large bottles, delighted with the tickling sensation in his nostrils. All this time the men of his tribe, crouched on the bank, followed with the greatest interest all that was passing on board. We offered him field glasses, through which he gazed at his people, and excitedly cried, 'Ah! ah! you are

there, there!' and with his foot he struck the deck in front of him. Then reversing the glasses, we made him look once more. His astonishment was great, and he shouted out something which we took to be the Shilouk equivalent for 'Now you are away to the devil!'

SHILOUKS Sanderson

"The manners of the Chief were excellent, reserved and dignified, until the moment when, no longer able to bear the tickling of the lemonade, and handkerchiefs being evidently unknown, he delicately seized his nose between his first finger and his thumb, and . . . well, you should have seen the faces of these ladies! But the most amused of all at the princely Shilouk manners was Mahkmoud — Mahkmoud, who was so accustomed to be in the service of distinguished and chic masters. He covered his face with both his hands to hide the amusement he could not suppress.

"Having invited us to visit his village, Okokwan landed with us, and, followed by all his people, we made our way to his huts, surrounded by a tall palisade, where he lives with his harem, and, my faith, a number of young negresses, decidedly pretty, and well-made. No old negresses for him! Okokwan

is evidently a connoisseur. He insisted on us entering, one at a time, his own hut, into which we penetrated by a small opening close to the ground. The visit was rather an anxious one when one remembered the aids to the toilette of a Shilouk; but there was no way of refusing, and each in his turn entered the hut on all fours. I must admit it was absolutely clean, perfect, and only a slightly close and negro odour would have rendered a longer stay disagreeable.

"Alone amongst his men the Chief has all his teeth—unmistakable sign of his royal origin. The other Shilouks may only retain the upper, the lower being extracted.

"Before our departure, Okokwan, to whom we had just offered the large sum of £1 sterling to be distributed amongst the women of the village, called them out, and ordered them to dance. Delighted, they gave themselves up to the performance, then the entire population accompanied us to the bank, singing and clapping their hands.

"The sun is already sinking, and the *Abbas Pasha* must now begin her return journey to Khartoum and civilisation. We are very sad that we can go no further.

"'Two days' journey from here,' the missionaries had told us, 'you will see herds of elephants and giraffes; and calico, black or white, is quite unknown!'

"Alas! our time is up, and we must retrace our steps . . . but, should the fates permit, it will be for another time!"

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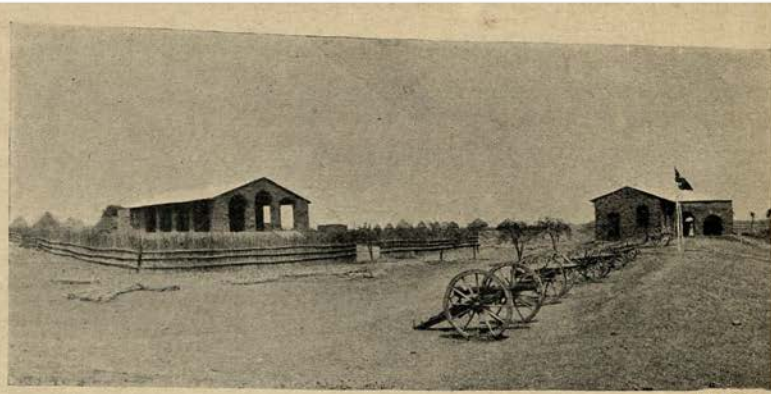

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FASHODA—THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE

CHAPTER XX

FASHODA

FASHODA, *February* 19, 1905.

I WRITE these lines seated under the palm-trees planted by Marchand. Poor trees! they are weak, and the shade which they cast is almost nil. Elsewhere they would be cut down for firewood; but here, no one who loves France can look upon them without a thrill of pride. These miserable palm-trees, sadly balancing their withered heads, here where the tricolour once proudly floated, were born under its shadow in territory which was then that of France. The flag has gone, but they remain, and still remain, a living symbol of a glorious page, and one of which every Frenchman may be proud.

Yes! you have read correctly. I have written "glorious" and "proud," not "defeat" and "shame," words which usually accompany the name of Fashoda in sensational articles of the Paris Press.

For those who only take into account the acts of the diplomatists, and the fact that, although arriving easily first on the White Nile, the Government abandoned the position before the threats of England, Fashoda naturally represents a defeat; but for those who, like myself, have travelled here, have seen and heard, there was no defeat, no backing down, no callous

diplomacy. There was only one thing: the epic of this handful of men who, through dangers without number, through difficulties almost insurmountable, through privations and sufferings, arrived here from the other side of Central Africa, to plant their flag upon the Nile. The courage, the perseverance, the self-abnegation which they showed are worthy of the finest pages in the record of the conquest of the Dark Continent. So, when the Anglo-Egyptian army, commanded by Kitchener, found itself face to face with this handful of heroes, all hostility vanished, and officers and soldiers were seized by a feeling, sincere and deep, of admiration and respect.

I am not exaggerating. Almost all the officers who to-day direct the affairs of the Sudan were then present. I have met them, spoken with them, they have brought vividly before my eyes the moving drama which was played on this desolate spot, and their words of praise are for Marchand—the finest monument which he could desire.

Lord Edward Cecil, son of the late Lord Salisbury, and Under Secretary for War in the Egyptian Government, thus expressed himself to me: "All of us have for Marchand a real and profound admiration. His march across the Bahr-el-Gazal was admirable. One must have seen the country to appreciate fully the unheard-of difficulties with which the French Expedition met. Every man was a hero; as to the officers, I cannot find terms of praise too high to describe their conduct. In fact, at Fashoda, all our sympathies, the sympathies of all the English officers there, were with Marchand. We had only one desire, to grasp him by the hand, and express to him our admiration. That was a soldier and a man!"

And words such as these of Lord Edward Cecil's I have heard issue from fifty different mouths, from that, amongst others, of Sir Reginald Wingate, Governor-General of the Sudan, whose friendly feelings towards France I have already mentioned.

General Wingate has frankly told me that he considered Fashoda as a nightmare, and that he desired one thing only, and that was that this incident, which might have been the cause of a terrible conflict between two great nations, should be forgotten by both, and spoken of no more. My first inclination was similar; but, on further thought, I asked myself if it

would not rather be better to thresh the matter out once and for all. In a general way I can safely affirm that the Fashoda affair has never been properly understood by the bulk of the French people, the great majority of whom are still under the impression that "perfidious Albion" took advantage of exceptional circumstances to snatch that which France had the right to consider as hers, since Marchand had taken possession of it.

I shall briefly explain, therefore, the events which took place in Central Africa in 1898, and I believe I shall be able to prove to the most rabid Anglophobe that England was then within her rights, and that the position of France was untenable.

On the morrow of the Battle of Kerreri, whilst the Anglo-Egyptian army was resting at Omdurman, a steamer suddenly appeared on the White Nile. It was one of Gordon's gunboats which had fallen into the hands of the Dervishes at the time of the taking of Khartoum. At the sight of the Egyptian flags, the boat stopped, turned tail, and fled under full steam. A gunboat was sent in pursuit and overtook her. The captain, an Arab who had served under Gordon, surrendered without firing a shot, and, brought before Lord Kitchener, he declared that he was one of a party sent by the Khalifa against a white Pasha, who had taken up a fortified position at Fashoda. The position was a strong one. The first attack of the Dervishes had been repulsed, and he had returned in order to ask for heavy reinforcements.

One can imagine the consternation of the English officers when they learned that the Upper Valley of the Nile was already occupied by Europeans, and that an unknown flag had been planted at Fashoda. The Arab captain declared that the flag was black, white and red, and that the strangers were armed with an extraordinary rifle which carried much further than theirs. It was then noticed that his boat was riddled with bullets, and several having been extracted they were recognised as French. From that to deduce that the flag was not black, but blue, white and red, and that France had succeeded in arriving between Egypt and the famous sources of the Nile was the work of a moment.

The situation was grave, but there was no time for delay.

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LORD EDWARD CECIL AND CAPTAIN OWEN

A few hours later, Lord Kitchener left Omdurman, taking with him on board several boats three thousand men and two batteries of artillery. He was also accompanied by four gun-boats, armed with rapid-firing guns.

When, eight days later, the Anglo-Egyptian flotilla cast anchor before the fort of Fashoda, Commandant Marchand came aboard the steamer, where he found Lord Kitchener, and informed him that he had, in the name of France, taken possession of Fashoda, of the Bahr-el-Gazal, and of the Sudan up to a point indicated, south of Omdurman. Lord Kitchener's reply was, that this pretension was inadmissible, that these provinces belonged to Egypt, which had never renounced them, although the successes of the Dervishes had obliged her to abandon them for several years. Now, with England's help, the Dervishes had been crushed, and the Sudan reconquered. Egypt could never allow another Power to instal herself in those provinces which she had spent blood and treasure to win. He, Lord Kitchener, had received orders to plant at Fashoda the flags of England and Egypt. He was very pleased to find Commandant Marchand and his companions in good health, and, in the name of the Khedive, he offered them a passage home by Khartoum and Cairo.

Commandant Marchand smiled, thanked him, and remarked, that having come here by the orders of his Government, he intended to stay where he was. Then Lord Kitchener, excited, rose, and with a sweep of his hand, showing his gun-boats, his artillery, and his soldiers, cried :

" What can you do against these ? "

With the greatest calm, but also with an expression which no soldier could mistake, Marchand replied :

" Die at my post ! "

Kitchener looked and understood. No amount of bluff would succeed with such a man. To attain his end he should have to bombard the fort, fling his troops against it, massacre this handful of brave men, and—his eyes wandered : he saw far off the two nations flying at one another's throats, war betwixt his country and that of Marchand's. Calmly he sat down, and, smiling, he said : " Commandant, have a whisky and soda ? "

How the affair ended is now well known. The two officers decided to remain in their positions until fresh instructions should arrive from their respective Governments. "There is no need for fighting nor for dying at your post," declared Kitchener. . . . "Your Government sent you here, your Government will call you back. Wait and see!"

And he left, leaving at Fashoda the majority of the soldiers which he had brought with him, and who lived on friendly terms with the members of the French Mission, whilst the Cabinets of London and Paris exchanged views.

The diplomatic action which followed belongs to history; but there are several points which are not quite clear, and to which I should like to draw attention. On one side, it has been asserted that Marchand and his force were almost destitute of supplies of food and ammunition. That is false. Marchand and his officers alone know the number of rounds which they possessed; but from the lips of the English officers themselves I have learned that they had an enormous quantity of provisions, sufficient to last several months. It is said that the position of the Mission was critical. That was not so. Their Chief was on the best of terms with the King of the Shilouks, and was able to obtain from him all the food he required.

As to the question of Marchand's power of resistance, I hardly think the matter worth discussing. Two hundred Senegal soldiers, encamped on the bank of a river, on land as flat as a billiard table, without artillery, could not long hold out against three thousand armed men, with all the guns which accompanied them. Shells and bullets in the end are more than a match even for courage and a just cause.

Marchand was alone; Kitchener could, in a few days, receive reinforcements of five thousand to six thousand men, besides gunboats and several batteries of artillery. There was no possibility of holding out against such odds in a position such as Fashoda. The conviction of the English officers is that Marchand and his force were saved from certain destruction by the victory of Kerreri, and the annihilation of the Dervishes. Had it not been for this battle the Khalifa would have sent against Marchand such an overwhelming force that there could have been but one result.

I know that in certain places this theory has not found acceptance; but, honestly, can one for a moment believe that Marchand and his two hundred Senegalese could have resisted these hordes of fanatics who captured El Obeid, annihilated the ten thousand men of Hicks, and destroyed Khartoum, defended as it was by Gordon, with numerous troops, artillery and gunboats? Could this handful of men, however brave, have repulsed indefinitely the forces of the Khalifa which were finally beaten only by an Anglo-Egyptian army of twenty thousand men, with powerful guns and several gunboats? It is evident that they could not.

It has been alleged that two things might have saved Marchand: an alliance with the Dervishes, or a revolt of the Egyptian troops against their English officers. The first of these hypotheses is, for all those who know the character of the Dervishes, an impossibility over the discussion of which it is useless to waste time, unless one supposes that the Khalifa would have accepted this alliance against the Anglo-Egyptian Army by which he was menaced; but such an alliance would have been equivalent on the part of France to a declaration of war against England and Egypt. Besides, the best proof that the Khalifa had no intention of living on friendly terms with the French Expedition is, that he had already sent a force against it, and that the weakness of this was caused only by the fact that at the same time he had to face the formidable army under Kitchener.

The latter, and the graver of these hypotheses, that which supposed the passing over of the Egyptians to Marchand's side, would probably not have been taken seriously by any one, had it not been mentioned by Marchand himself. The Commandant had said that a certain number of Egyptian officers had given him to understand that all their sympathies were with him, and that if it came to a fight they would be found on his side.

Well, frankly, if Marchand believed that, he was mistaken. I have spoken with Egyptian officers on the subject, and they have all declared that such an idea had never entered their minds: that their sympathies were with Marchand they did not attempt to conceal, but from that to passing over to him bag

and baggage, was a very different thing. It must not be forgotten either, that at Omdurman there were seven thousand English troops, and that the Sudanese regiments, numbering some five thousand men, would never have followed the Egyptians, so that they would actually have been in a minority. If the Egyptian Government had declared for France, then things would have been different. But can one conceive that the Khedive would have desired to see France settle herself down in the Sudan, which, with the help of England, he had just reconquered ?

" Believe me," Abani Pasha, Minister of War, said to me on this subject, " no Egyptian officer offered his sword to Marchand at Fashoda. What possibly might have happened is, that when the Chief of the French Mission came to Cairo, where he was *feted* by the Egyptians, who admired him immensely, some officer or other, between a couple of glasses of champagne, may have said, 'Ah ! if you had only held out, we were with you ! ' One can easily understand that after a good dinner . . . but to desert one's post at the moment of battle, that is quite another matter."

What no one can understand at Cairo, or, I believe, elsewhere, is why Marchand was sent towards the White Nile.

" One could not imagine a greater piece of stupidity," a distinguished diplomatist said to me. " For even if it was a simple promenade, it was a useless one. And if France did wish to establish herself on the Nile, she ought to have known that England would never allow it, and that it meant war. To take the Dervishes in the rear, to instal herself at the sources of the Nile, that was a brilliant idea ; but it was necessary to be prepared to press the matter to a conclusion, in a word it was necessary to be ready to face a war, or else do nothing. One cannot conquer the Sudan with four officers and two hundred men."

And that is so obvious that one cannot help asking what the Minister responsible for this expedition thought he was doing. In default of definite information let us consider a supposition. It is :

Supposing Kitchener, instead of being victorious over the Dervishes, had been beaten, as Hicks, Gordon, and others had

been. The thing was not impossible. Now, supposing again that a large Abyssinian army had joined Marchand, and that under his leadership they had fallen on the Dervishes from the rear and crushed them, he would have reconquered Khartoum. The situation in that case would have been different, and France would have been in reality mistress of the Sudan.

But Kitchener triumphed instead of being vanquished, and the large Abyssinian army never left its mountains, although I have heard tell that its advance guard arrived on the banks of the White Nile, and then retired, several days before Marchand's arrival!

The general opinion, in the Sudan as in Egypt, is that the position at Fashoda was untenable, as well from the diplomatic as from the military point of view. It was perfectly certain that, after the enormous effort which England had just caused Egypt to make in order to reconquer the Sudan, and after the immense outlay in money and men on the part of both nations, she would never abandon the fruits of her victory. There was therefore only one of two things to be done; either retire or fight for a very bad cause.

"Is it possible," cried Lord Cromer, as he gazed at the barren, burnt soil of Fashoda, the miserable palm-trees of Marchand, and the round huts of the Shilouks, "is it possible that two civilised nations should have been on the point of coming to blows for such a hole?"

But Fashoda then represented the undoubted rights of Egypt to all the Nile Valley, and the sources of the river. War was avoided, and I am convinced that the Marchand Mission has had a result not to be despised. There is nothing the English admire more than energy and courage. Marchand and his comrades have appealed to them by these qualities, and every officer who conquered at Omdurman and reached Fashoda, has learned to admire and respect France in the person of her officers.

"All our sympathy was with them," is what they say to-day.

Sympathy leads to friendship, and these diplomatists, and these English soldiers who are in the service of Egypt and the Sudan, are all admirers of Marchand, and friends of France.

Along with Lord Cromer, they have worked hardest towards the Anglo-French *entente* in Egypt, and, in consequence, towards the better feeling between the two nations. The desire to please France has been so great that the name of Fashoda has been replaced officially by the native name, Kodok. My humble opinion is, that every Frenchman, at least all those who come here, will continue to call Kodok by the old name of Fashoda—the only name which can bring back to their memories the glorious effort of that handful of heroes who once planted the flag of France on its desolate soil.

Since these lines were written I have read the pages which M. de Freycinet has devoted to these events in "La Question d'Egypte." He points out there, that in signing with Germany in 1890 a convention with regard to their respective colonies on the eastern side of Africa, Great Britain reserved to herself "the basin of the Upper Nile as far as the boundaries of Egypt." According to this author, England, not having stated in this convention in formal terms that she was acting in the name of the Khedive or of his Sovereign the Sultan of Turkey, one can believe that she considered the ancient Egyptian possessions as a no-man's-land, which would become the property of the first person who occupied it.

That, of course, is mere quibbling, since, some pages earlier, M. de Freycinet wrote: "But the Khedive has not abandoned the Sudan in the judicial sense of the word, he has not declared that he has renounced it for good, he has neither ceded it nor alienated it. In evacuating it he has obeyed strategical necessities; he has executed a simple military operation."

In spite of the clearness of this declaration, it would appear from the pages of M. de Freycinet, that the French Government decided to send Marchand "with the certitude, if we did not lose time, of being the first occupant as against any other nation. But it must not be lost sight of that our right remained precarious and conditional, in this sense, that it would disappear in the case of the Sultan, either himself, or through his delegate the Khedive, attempting to reconquer the Sudan. Such is the point of view from which it is necessary to regard the expedition organised by the French Government with the object

of exploring our eventual possessions, and of having our provisional authority recognised. The only mistake which we then made was, that we did not give to our intentions sufficient publicity. The half-silence which we kept was liable to give the impression that we had designs much greater than was the case, and that we meditated a species of definite conquest. As if a mission of two hundred and fifty men could have had any such pretension!"

A good deal might be said in answer to this, but what is the good? As Sir Reginald Wingate says, "It is a nightmare, which is better forgotten."

Besides, M. de Freycinet recognises frankly that the position of France was untenable, and I cannot better conclude than by quoting his own words: "After the capture of Khartoum we could no longer delude ourselves. It was evident that the entire Sudan was open to the Anglo-Egyptian army. The Marchand Mission had lost its *raison d'être* as far as taking possession was concerned. We had no valid arguments against its restoration to the Khedivial authority. . . . M. Delcassé has only abandoned what he could not have retained, for it was not ours to keep."

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